THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE RETAIL CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT IN YORKSHIRE DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with the origins and development of the Retail Co-operative Movement in Yorkshire between 1795-1914. Co-operative development is viewed in terms of its own internal necessities and resources, especially the extent to which it depended on the distinctive ideology provided by Owenism, and also in relation to the economic and social characteristics of the society which contained it.

The work is divided into nine main chapters. Early co-operative theorists and the dominant role played by Yorkshire co-operators are considered in the opening two chapters. Rochdale's place in co-operative development is analysed in Chapter Three. Chapter Four surveys the great variety of origins within the retail movement. The tangible results of development are examined in Chapter Five and point to the distinctiveness of the co-operative achievement. Indeed, societies were at the forefront of many of the economic and social changes. Chapter Six assessed the contribution the Mytholmroyd society, near Halifax, made to village life 120 years ago. A valuable seam of primary research material has enabled an in-depth study to be carried out on the shopping and investing characteristics of members based on their social status. The causes of development and growth are considered in detail in Chapters Seven and Eight. Chapter Nine is a two-part conclusion. Part One summarizes the main findings of the thesis relating to the capitalist tendencies of co-operators; the class heterogeneity of the movement; the outmoded Rochdale Model and the importance of local considerations in understanding co-operative origins and development. Part Two reviews recent radical changes in retailing in order to throw light on the earlier history of the societies.

It is clear from this research that the vision of leading members narrowed as the century progressed so that in effect it had come close to that of the shopkeepers with whom they competed. The local communities in which the societies prospered cut across conventional class (and religious) boundaries. Thus co-operatives prospered: arising from community rather than purely working-class

resources of enterprise and trust, they reinforced the very community structure and relations in which early industrialism had arisen and advanced and in which it had stimulated class division. But the co-operatives were an antidote to class conflict. Co-operatives conferred enormous advantages, both economic and social, on hundreds of thousands of Yorkshire people.

INTRODUCTION

Arnold Toynbee was a keen advocate of the co-operative cause, especially in the field of education. At the 1882 Co-operative Congress held at Rochdale he delivered a lecture entitled "The Education of Co-operators" in which he stressed the need for co-operators to take a greater interest in education, especially the education of the citizen in his duties as a citizen.[1] But he recognised that even with competent teachers and the availability of adequate financial resources the greatest obstacle to such a scheme would still be the apathy of co-operators themselves towards the acquisition of knowledge. Toynbee acknowledged the difficulty of persuading workingmen to listen to anything which did not concern pleasure or profit and went so far as to indicate that this trait was even stronger than it had been earlier in the century. This most typical spokesman of the philanthropic sentiment of reform of the time quotes from the autobiography of Thomas Cooper, a man who had spent the best years of his life in ardent and daring advocacy of the workman's cause. Cooper could remember, 40 years before, eager groups of artisans discussing political questions, whereas:

> "... now you will see no such groups ... But you will hear well dressed working men talking, as they walk with their hands in their pockets, of co-ops', and their shares in them, or in building societies. And you will see others, like idiots, leading small greyhound dogs, covered with cloth on a string! They are about to race, and they are betting money as they go! And yonder comes another clamorous dozen of men, cursing and swearing, and betting upon a few pigeons they are about to let fly! As for their betting on horses - like their masters! - it is perfect madness ... Working men had ceased to think, and wanted to hear no thoughtful talk: at least, it was so with the greater number of them."

Toynbee recognised Cooper's natural pride in an earlier generation. He felt that one reason for there being less interest in political and social questions was the increased prosperity and material comforts which diminished spiritual energy. Also that for

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1. This lecture is reproduced in full in Appendix 8-2.

men wearied by long hours of monotonous toil it was not unnatural to indulge in sports and coarse amusements rather than devote their scarce leisure time to intellectual exertion. However Toynbee felt that if political progress was not to end in political degradation, the effort must be made. A number of leading academics shared this viewpoint and worked hard in the co-operative cause. This speech shows poignantly one of the most important points of this thesis - the 'capitalist' involvement of the working classes in the Co-operative Movement - what they saw in the societies for themselves. The involvement of people like Toynbee also introduces another aspect of the thesis which will be covered later which concerns the character of the co-operatives as not being exclusively a working-class preserve.

A project carried out by the author in the final year of a B.A. (Hons) degree course at the University of York covered the "Economic and Social Development of the Co-operative Movement in the first half of the nineteenth century". Although the project concentrated on the national scene and the well known authors, a limited amount of research was also carried out at local level, utilizing minute books and local society histories. It became clear that by approaching the subject from the perspective of the 'bottom up' a number of interesting and significant features emerged which differed from the conventional textbook analysis of co-operative development. Aspects relating to the granting of credit, the poor quality and amount of educational provision, the extent of local autonomy, all indicated that there was a need to explore the subject more deeply. Therefore when research commenced on this thesis a conscious decision was taken to examine the growth and development of the interrelated but independently organised societies and to see the Co-operative Movement in relation to other social and economic forces. While recognising the value of earlier work a deeper and more detailed understanding was felt to be both desirable and feasible. The Yorkshire of the nineteenth century was at the heartland of the Co-operative Movement and the economic and social changes taking place in English society. Since analytical studies of Co-operation are comparatively rare this study offers a positive and original contribution to the history of this country in the nineteenth century and the early part of the present

century.

One major outcome of the distinctive delving into local histories has been to question the Rochdale model of co-operative development that has in many ways shaped our conceptions of the Co-operative Movement. The Pioneers' principles and their practical success were a general cause of the spread of successful co-operative retail societies. But so was their capacity to be appreciated and applied in a variety of local circumstances which were in turn, the essence of local community sentiment. And that sentiment both strengthened the local society yet required it to remain local in many instances. Just because Rochdale was conceived and developed in a certain way is no reason to presuppose that all subsequent societies followed the same path of development. Local customs, divisions, and conditions are all important considerations when analysing the origins and development of societies that by their very structure were autonomous and separate bodies. The Rochdale Model could be, and often was, re-shaped to meet local requirements.

Co-operation developed in a quiet, orderly and inconspicuous way. It attracted little attention from the Government; consequently its history lacks the invaluable records of Parliamentary Commissions. Societies did seek government support but only to the extent of securing legal recognition so that they might protect their funds from fraud, gain limited liability and engage in federal undertakings. The material required for this study had therefore to be sought in the private records of societies where these have been preserved, in the lives of the men who devoted themselves to the work (most of whom, like Thomas Hirst of Huddersfield, were too obscure for biographies), Society Jubilee Histories, local and national newspapers, and the periodicals and pamphlets issued by the co-operators which were numerous but highly partisan. Hence Holyoake's work in perpetuating some of their contents is particularly useful. Holyoake's story of the Movement is that of an eyewitness, giving particulars of the persons who made the Movement including brief comments upon them which give valuable insights into their personalities.[1]

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1. G.J. Holyoake, History of Co-operation (1906)

Beatrice Webb's History of the Co-operative Movement, published in 1891, had a great influence and set a precedent for later historians. Unfortunately Webb's history views co-operative development almost exclusively in terms of the Rochdale achievement and castigates the proponents of Producer's Co-operation as narrowmindedly impractical idealists whose efforts not only had little to do with the Movement's success, but may even have inhibited it. G.D.H. Cole in his Century of Co-operation follows in the same tradition as Webb. Indeed, Cole in his tribute to the Rochdale Pioneers, and Webb in her writings, both offer a rather institutional analysis of the Co-operative Movement with the Rochdale elite acting as the vanguard for co-operative development. It was with Carr-Saunders in 1938 that the most comprehensive examination of the Co-operative Movement's aims, methods and results took place.[1] Although the Carr-Saunders survey was a considerable advance on previous studies there was still a dearth of material relating to local circumstances and arrangements, the nature of co-operative leadership and membership, the origins of societies and the aims and aspirations of ordinary co-operators.

This research has uncovered a considerable amount of original data in the form of minute books, balance sheets, cash books, share ledgers and correspondence. Indeed, despite the destruction of much primary material by twentieth century merger activity, original information for over fifty societies has been found varying from a few loose sheets recording inaugural meetings to a full run of minute books. Early minuted information is rare and this is not unexpected when it is considered that committees would probably be reluctant to go to great expense and buy proper minute books before they had established a clear picture of whether their new venture would have a long life.[2] Complete sets of business records are equally elusive, with the Mytholmroyd society near Halifax being the only society identified with a comprehensive record of their members'

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1. A.M. Carr-Saunders, P. Sargant Florence and Robert Peers, Consumers' Co-operation in Great Britain, (1938).
2. The number of societies has reduced from 1439 in 1900 down under 100 in 1986 (May).

shareholdings and purchases, together with addresses, that have allowed census returns to be utilized. Only by delving into what was being resolved at local level, by local people, can an accurate analysis be undertaken. The uniqueness of these sources is that they enable a diversified process to be traced instead of the uniformity of development that has been a feature of earlier work on the subject.

Co-operative periodicals and newspapers have been used to supplement original material. The Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator (1831-32), The Economist (1821-22), Co-operative Magazine (1826-30), Co-operator (1828-30), The Crisis (1832-34), The Co-operator (1860-71) and the Co-operative News (1871-) have been extremely helpful and this study has utilized verbatim comments to achieve a feeling for the period studied. The early co-operators commented on a wide range of themes that relate to the economic and social development of English Society: in this way too, therefore, the study of Co-operation is fruitful.

Society histories have also been used, it being standard practice for many co-operative societies to document their own progress in the form of Jubilee Histories, Centenary Histories or merely in 'coming-of-age' publications. There are over sixty such publications relating to Yorkshire societies, ranging from six pages marking the fifty years progress of the Castle Howard and District Society to 260 pages describing the Leeds Industrial Society. Authors ranged from the typical Managing Secretary, more interested in trading activities and material progress to a propagandist like G.J. Holyoake who was prepared to write a society's history for as little as £10.[1] The standard of most of these publications is not high, concentrating on items such as "opening a shop in Brook Street" or "painting the outside of the main store". However, many authors still managed to give insights into the composition of Boards of Directors, backgrounds of leading members, reasons for the establishment of local societies, economic conditions prevailing in particular areas, details of prices charged and range of goods offered in shops, educational activities, credit provision -

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1. As recorded in early records of the Castleford society.

material that shows the relationship that existed in different localities between the ordinary members, their committee, and the wider community. In order to establish a sound statistical base Co-operative Union annual returns have been used as building blocks to present as far as possible a comprehensive description of the Movement in Yorkshire. The Co-operative Movement as in the case with most great social movements which grew half consciously from popular needs, did not actively preserve the records of its now somewhat obscure origins, so sharing the problem of severe shortage of primary materials which hampers all studies of the common people. Indeed they were never in a position to leave the quantities of literary evidence that the letter-writing classes provided for posterity.

In presentation an attempt has been made in each chapter to give a rounded treatment of particular subjects, thus deviating from the more conventional pattern of a historical narrative unfolding in chronological sequence. This work covers a period from 1795 to 1914; however the main thrust is shorter, between 1844 and 1914. Chapter One presents essential background information on the early co-operative theorists, their views on society and schemes for establishing Villages of Co-operation. Owen, Thompson, King and Hodgskin advanced radical solutions associated with labour theories of value. Co-operation to them seemed to offer to the mass of the people a way of escape from exploitation and the miseries of the new industrial society. The influential role played by Yorkshire co-operators in terms of organisational unity and in articulating working class aspirations is covered in Chapter Two. Yorkshire was a very important centre of co-operative activity and the influences of the theorists is evident, together with those of Methodism. This strand of Co-operation was in no way reactionary; it did not blame machinery for all the evils of society. Machinery was not regarded as the enemy of the working classes, but the way that machinery was controlled was condemned. The old paternalism was not completely dead in Yorkshire with Lady Byron, wife of the great poet, and Harriet Martineau being two keen advocates of the new social Movement, provided of course that the "poor pursue their claims with moderation and forebearance".

Yorkshiremen played a key role in the establishment of the institutional framework which allowed societies to develop, but it will be shown that local interests were finally the decisive force operating on societies. It is significant in many ways that these two opening chapters are full of information relating to the ideas, aspirations and goals of co-operators, whereas there is a relative absence of occasions for discussion of ideas in subsequent chapters. Idealistic schemes were shelved as the new formula proved its worth in an age that was beginning to offer growing economic benefits for larger sections of the community. People in the main did not view co-operation as completely replacing capitalism, but as modifying its more harmful effects.

Chapter Three examines Rochdale's place in co-operative history, especially in terms of clearly defined objects and principles. Again the strong Yorkshire influence is evident with the objects of the new movement bearing a striking resemblance to the model rules of the early Co-operative Congresses drafted by Yorkshiremen. Communitarian ideas were on the wane especially when the Victorian idealisation of the home is taken into consideration. The idea of home and a woman's place in it served as a sort of moral pivot upon the steadfastness, of which turned the stability of society itself. It enforced attention to practical daily needs and efficient means to satisfy them. This was the spirit of the cry, "let us become our own shopkeepers" that moved the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers. Schemes adopted in an earlier period had failed to yield tangible immediate results, whereas the Rochdale plan had a practical, durable appeal to the workers. It made a fresh appeal to a generation which, in an age of greater prosperity, came to enjoy some slight margin for the exercise of thrift. In Chapter Four the diverse origins of the post-Rochdale movement in Yorkshire are outlined. This research shows that local conditions, circumstances and modes of behaviour were important characteristics in co-operative development. Close analysis of society origins has shown that over 400 separate societies were established in Yorkshire. Some, like Mytholmroyd, could be viewed in territorial terms. In Wakefield, by contrast, after an inaugural meeting failed to unite disparate groups, prison officers and railway workers

established their own separate societies on occupational lines. In Golcar, near Huddersfield, the Liberals established one society and the Tories another. In other parts of the West Riding topographical factors would have encouraged the development of separate societies. People in a valley community would often establish their own society as would those situated in the hamlets high on the Pennines. In towns and some villages one widely held view was that people were prepared to walk up a hill to trade but would not walk down because of the extra effort required to carry home heavy shopping baskets. It was not only natural barriers that helped to multiply the number of societies for a railway line, canal or a road could create distinct localities that in turn could lead local residents into deciding to establish their own separate retail society. Localism with all its practical concerns and constraints is an important feature of this thesis which must be recognised when analysing co-operative growth and development.

The practical economic results of co-operative development are considered in Chapter Five. The growth of the movement is set against the retailing revolution, growth in per capita income and the societies' pioneering methods of retail distribution. Co-operative growth gave rise to a surplus which would have allowed for resources to be converted into collective capital for development, but lack of ideas and appropriate organisation prevented this course of action being followed. Instead, high dividends were paid. A strand of Yorkshire independence, almost parochialism, overrode schemes based on idealism. Halifax, a society with Chartist origins, was swept along on this tide and in the process lost over £100,000 by speculative investments through the stock exchange. Chapter Six introduces a study of a small society, Mytholmroyd, that prospered in the Calderdale Valley over one hundred years ago. A rich source of original research material has enabled a detailed investigation to be undertaken into the purchasing and investing behaviour of members in terms of their social status. The research shows that the society penetrated every section of the community and that the unskilled members eclipsed the skilled workers in relative percentage terms in both the purchasing and investing categories. This distinctive analysis has shown that the vast majority of members from all social classes withdrew bonus payments, showing that the dividend was not used as a form of saving but as a universal

system of discount. It is felt that the findings of this local analysis can be generalised and applied to the rest of the Movement. The support for the society amongst all sections of the community in Mytholmroyd can be shown to hold for many societies studied, and minutes and other reports reinforce the point that the dividend was a form of discount. The role of the unskilled member cannot be generalised in the same way, mainly because of the scarcity of primary material relating to this group. However it would seem a reasonable expectation that the practical benefits of Co-operation would encourage many of them to participate. The Mytholmroyd information has also been used in other chapters as an important element in discussing the major themes and issues.

The causes of co-operative development and growth are assessed in Chapter Seven in terms of legal status, democratic control, credit provision, beliefs and attitudes and religion. It was an independent path of development. However, it went with the heterogeneity of the working classes that they could not readily provide their own leadership so that a number of the most prominent figures nationally, and to a lesser extent locally, were drawn from outside their ranks. E.V. Neale was one of the most important theorists. Communal solidarity was necessary, according to Neale, before there could be any really comprehensive gains in emancipating working men from their existing state of 'slavery' to capital. Retailing was viewed by Neale as being only one aspect of co-operative development. Indeed, Co-operation was designed to embrace all fields of economic and social life. But Neale, and his colleagues with similar views, lost ground to forceful men from working class backgrounds, like J.T. Mitchell, chairman of the CWS, who were more interested in immediate benefits for the consumer than schemes designed to employ members in productive undertakings. As the societies attracted support from all sections of English society, Co-operation is instrumental in showing some of the underlying structures of society. In this perspective, for instance, social relationships enveloping the working classes, middle class radicals, manufacturers, religious groups and the state emerge in an interesting light. Co-operation had never been closed to the middle and upper

classes, e.g. King and Owen, and after 1850, with the decline of working class idealism and the rise of pragmatism, the Movement was willing to welcome, at least to listen politely to, middle and upper class friends. Another interesting conclusion concerns the widespread use of credit, which does not accord well with the traditional text book analysis in which credit was scorned, and only rarely given. Chapter Eight shows the broad development of organisation by looking at the establishment of the federal organisations, co-operative production, education and social welfare. It is clear that Co-operative ideology becomes more inward looking. As Toynbee noted at the start of the chapter there was more concentration on business matters such as retailing and financial stability. This is clearly visible in the poor record of the majority of societies, in the education field. There was in fact little enthusiasm for education amongst co-operators and this again contrasts with the conventional analysis. Chapter Nine serves as a two-part conclusion. Part One summarizes and brings together the main findings relating to the capitalist tendencies of co-operators; the class heterogeneity of the Movement; the Rochdale Model and localism. Part Two reviews the radical changes in retailing since the 1950's. The purpose of using the present is to throw light on the earlier history of the societies. In this age of price competition akin to that of the Victorian decades in which the co-operatives had flourished, private retailers were outdoing the Co-operative Movement. A Movement which had found means to beat the competition in its early innovative years now lacked the capacity to achieve as much. About the time of the First World War the co-operatives as a whole had ceased to contain much capacity for innovative enterprise and had become essentially conservative and defensive.

It should also be recognised that while the early history of the Movement shows that its origins were socialist and collectivist, co-operative development in the second half of the nineteenth century indicates the importance of the dividend - and the dividend is a sign of individualism. The dividing line between collectivism and individualism was very fluid, indeed so much so that many viewed Co-operation as the great reconciling principle between the two schools of thought. Co-operative development is viewed as among the typical and most representative social innovations of the age because it combined

high aspirations with strenuous action and because it set itself to develop the spontaneous energies of individuals while training them for collective action by the aid of collective resources and for the attainment of collective ends. The 'cash nexus' was in harmony with the predominantly individualistic goals and values of working people at the time, interested in the 'divi' and a safe place for their savings. By paying into a co-operative, by having a stake in the business, a person would often develop skills associated with responsibility and stewardship that also led him increasingly to view his society more in economic terms than in ideological terms. William Henderson, President of the Kilbirnie society, expressed this view in a letter to the Editor of the Co-operative News concerning employees:

> "The policy I wish pursued with all co-operative servants is to pay them a fair day's wage for an honest day's work. I think it is a bad idea to pander to, pet and spoil servants. If they are irregular in their habits and careless about the business, turn them out. Co-operation must be conducted on the same lines as private enterprise in regard to labour and wages. If you do not do this, you cannot compete."[1]

The popularity of this attitude not only among committee men but the rank and file, suggests in many respects how little remained of Co-operation's socialist origins. Indeed the question arises as to whether it is possible to speak consistently about working men, or to use the term working class when referring to the Co-operative Movement.

However, the cash nexus interpretation was in many ways superficial. It was the practical expression of a deeper connection. Success resulting merely from nothing more than an offer to trade with the promise of a dividend from time to time on the value of a member's purchases may be self evident. But each local co-operative was locally an innovation, a strange new phenomenon and one opposed often by local traders. Therefore trust based on existing community links becomes important. Co-operatives would not have done so well on a pure cash nexus basis. The evidence for this interpretation is to be found in

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1. Co-operative News, 24th September, 1887, p 231.

the relations between committees and members, e.g. the importance of discipline with committees exercising close control with penalties for those who transgressed, the granting of credit which was done on very personal grounds, the need to supply good quality food at reasonable prices, the provision of savings and discount facilities. The 'lack of trust' in the old truck relationship contrasted starkly with the co-operative store system operating in local communities. Indeed the revolt against 'truck' was one force that went to the making of the Co-operative Movement. Local communities were places favourable to innovations based on trust.

A significant problem encountered with this thesis concerns the treatment of the motives and attitudes of members, especially the leaders. The question of motives and rewards is made difficult by the slightness of evidence, yet its interest and importance for interpreting the Movement and its place in society are such that certain conjectures will be offered in the light of such evidence as there is. However it seems that a significant minority of leaders (leading members), whatever they laboured for, cannot have done so for monetary reward, so small were the expenses allowed, or even the salaries paid, where applicable. So it is necessary to explore possible explanations. Rewards could have been in the form of social esteem and a sense of constructive achievement. A committee man would be elected to office by his peers who would judge him on results. If results were good then their status, power and influence within the community would increase and give those concerned a positive psychological boost - they would feel good. Their involvement could also be viewed in terms of social-class solidarity, as a stimulus for the clever and strong to help the weak. Also in religious terms - across as well as within classes.

Altruism was an essential ingredient, indeed principle, of co-operative development. By appealing to the altruism in man, it commanded from its members effort which exceeded their personal reward. The primary fact for them was that their society was something that they, personally, had created. The society was something to which the members belonged in more than a general sense; its well-being depended upon members playing their part, it was only by loyalty that the

co-operative could exist. The majority of members probably did not have this sense in any highly developed form, but they were usually conscious of the society as a part of the local scene, run by the efforts and enterprise of men who were known to them personally. Even in the 1980's many societies still refuse to merge into larger societies, and the main reason advanced for this attitude is that members are proud of their local society and the local identity would disappear in a larger anonymous organisation. There is a lot of evidence concerning the proud, even stubborn, independence of the societies, showing the strength of local affections. Indeed a consumer co-operative is founded upon open voluntary association with non-transferable membership and exists for the efficient provision of goods and services to its members and the community. In contrast, a capitalist organisation is founded on individual property rights which can be sold or otherwise transferred and exists to provide financial benefits for the owner. The concept of voluntary service is also closely linked with that of local autonomy from which there emerges a picture of a group of local people coming together in a democratic fashion, making decisions affecting their local society with leaders and ordinary members being knitted together by the trust which can arise among people who know each other as a result of close personal contact.

Societies had a wide variety of circumstances and interests in their foundation. This viewpoint throws light on the history of the wider Movement, suggesting the constraints faced by those leaders, like Neale, who hoped for further innovations after 'Rochdale' when they tried to unite such a heterogeneous group in common causes. It was the leading members of the local societies, without whom they would not have developed so successfully, who rejected Neale's larger hopes or paid only lip service. Their vision seems to have narrowed so that in effect it had come close to that of the shopkeepers with whom they competed. The local communities in which the societies prospered cut across conventional class (and religious) boundaries. Thus co-operatives prospered: arising from community rather than purely working-class resources of enterprise and trust, they reinforced the very community structure and relations in which early industrialism had arisen and

advanced and in which it had stimulated class division. But the co-operatives were an antidote to class conflict. One fact is certain: co-operative growth conferred enormous advantages, both economic and social, on hundreds of thousands of Yorkshire people.

CHAPTER ONE

EARLY CO-OPERATIVE THEORISTS

EARLY EXPERIMENTS

The first organised co-operative was probably amongst workmen employed by the Government in the Naval Dockyards of Woolwich and Chatham, who, as early as 1760, had founded corn mills on a co-operative basis as a move against high prices charged by the corn millers who held the local monopoly.[1] The French Wars led to a sharp rise in the price of bread and we see more co-operative activity with the founding of the Hull Anti-Mill in 1795 and Hull Subscription Mill in 1801.[2] This growth spread to Beverley and as far as Whitby where a "Union Mill" was erected in 1812. These first co-operative experiments were isolated attempts on the part of groups of people to provide themselves with the necessaries of life at a reasonable price.[3]

The Hull Anti-Mill Society as it was called, was formed on September 24th 1795. These early co-operators started by the presentation of a memorial to the Hull Corporation asking for assistance. The text of this document is blunt and to the point:

> "We the poor inhabitants of the said town, have lately experienced much trouble and sorrow in ourselves and families on the occasion of an exorbitant price of flour; that, though the price is much reduced at present, yet we judge it needful to make every precaution to preserve ourselves from the invasions of covetous and merciless men in future. In consequence thereof, we have entered into a subscription, each subscriber to pay 1/1d. per week for four weeks, and 6d. per week for four weeks more, which is to be the subscribers', their heirs, executors, administrators, or assigns for ever, in order to supply

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1. G.D.H. Cole, Century of Co-operation, (1944), p 13.
2. The harvest of the year 1795 had been a short one and wheat prices were considerably higher than for at least thirty five years preceding. The average price in 1795 was 72s 11d. per quarter, it having at one period of the year risen to six guineas. G.R. Porter, The Progress of The Nation - Interchange, and Revenue and Expenditure, (1838) Section III, Chapter XIV, p 243.
3. Groups of working people had most probably purchased in bulk for centuries.

them flour; but we are conscious that this subscription will not be sufficient to bring about our purpose, we do therefore, humbly beseech your worship's advice and assistance in this great undertaking, that not only we but our children even yet unborn may have cause to bless you."[1]

Unfortunately, no official assistance was forthcoming and a subscription list was sent out which resulted in a sum of £350 being raised by sympathetic people, including the Mayor and Aldermen of the city. The original membership reached 1435 which does imply that this early co-operative scheme had sizable support in the city.[2] On June 7th 1796, the foundation stone was laid by Sir Henry Etherington, Bart, who had given £100 towards its erection. The mill was opened on June 7th 1797, the cost being upwards of £2,200.[3]

Thompson believes it is possible to detect in almost every eighteenth century crowd action some legitimizing notion, the belief that they were supported by the consensus of the wider community.[4] However, the repeal of legislation against forestalling in 1772, signalled a victory in this area, for laissez-faire. This according to Thompson "signified less a new model than an anti-model - a direct negative to the disintegrated Tudor policies of provision".[5]

The new political economy was disinfested of intrusive moral imperatives. To petitioning to enforce the ancient laws which formerly protected their standard of living or to help them out of their distress it was answered, on the high scientific authority of Adam Smith, that the state could do no better than allow economic tendencies to take their course, and that any attempt on its part to intervene would sooner or later make matters worse than before. But it is clear from the example of the Hull Anti-Mill that the moral economy of the crowd took longer to die, and Thompson states that it was picked up by the early co-operative flour mills. These Hull co-operators went through the time established tradition of presenting their memorial to the corporation, and even though this did not produce the desired

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1. S. Marshall, Co-operative Development in Kingston upon Hull and District, (Manchester, 1951), p 130.
2. Hull's population was 30,000 in 1800, B.R. Mitchell and P.Deane, Abstract of British Historical Statistics, (Cambridge, 1962), p 24.
3. Had a 100 year existence, ceased to function in 1895.
4. E.P. Thompson, 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century', Past and Present, 50, (1971), p 78.
5. Thompson, op.cit., p 89.

result they still secured the help and assistance of some of the leading citizens of Hull. What this early co-operative venture displays is a desire by working people to work within the existing framework of society, a view grounded upon a consistent traditional view of social norms and obligations, of the proper economic functions of several parties within the community which, according to Thompson, "taken together, can be said to constitute the moral economy of the poor".[1]

It is impossible to say when co-operative storekeeping, as distinct from milling and baking, began. The first recorded case was that of the Weavers' Society at Fenwick in Ayrshire.[2] This society began to trade by clubbing together to buy necessaries as early as 1769. The earliest known English store was the Oldham Co-operative Supply Company formed in the same year as the Hull Anti-Mill Society, 1795. Another, Scottish society, Lennoxtown, is reported to have adopted the method of dividend on purchases long before the Rochdale Pioneers were heard of.[3] Many of these early co-operative ventures showed a very practical commonsense approach to situations that developed in specific localities. However a number owed something to the 'ideology of the crowd' and traditional society as indicated by the experience of the Hull Anti-Mill Society and the Leeds Corn Mill Society described in Chapter 4. What is clear from co-operative development in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is the ambiguous, indeed uncertain, relationship between ideology and practice.

ROBERT OWEN AND THE EARLY CO-OPERATIVE THEORISTS

The co-operative ventures described above had no ulterior purpose and were not linked together in any wider movement. However, under the influence of Robert Owen, Co-operation became a new and

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1. E.P. Thompson, 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century', Past and Present, 50, (1971), p 79.
2. G.D.H. Cole, A Century of Co-operation, (Manchester, 1944), p 14.
3. Meltham Mills in Yorkshire was paying a dividend from 1827. Co-operative News, October 7th, 1871, p 51.

conscious principle of social organisation Co-operation, in opposition to competition, seemed to offer to the mass of the people a way of escape from misery and poverty. It linked on to the past in its appeal to a community sentiment which was not yet dead; it was a criticism of the confusion of the age; and above all it offered a constructive plan for the future.

Co-operation, as it developed under the influence of Owen, was one aspect of his general attack on the claims of private property; but unlike others it envisaged, not the expropriation of existing property owners, but the voluntary accumulation of common possessions, in order that the many might be set free from dependence on the few who monopolized the means of production and used them at the expense of others, for their own private gain. According to Beer it was from Owen that the working classes learned socialism, and it was essentially co-operative socialism and not militant socialism.[1] Owen's struggle was not primarily against usurpation and wickedness, "but against error and ignorance". Beer correctly observed that Owenite socialism was "pacific, constructive, educational and non-political." Class warfare, passionate appeals to labour, demands for legal enactments and government reforms were regarded as not only futile but directly detrimental to the cause of the people.

Owen was very concerned with factory conditions, and campaigned for a Factory Act to protect child labour in cotton factories. The new manufacturing system, he believed, operated in a way that generated a new character in the country's inhabitants, and this being founded upon a principle quite unfavourable to individual and general happiness would produce the most lamentable and permanent evils. He believed that the acquisition of wealth, and the desire for continued increase, introduced a fondness for essentially injurious luxuries and generated a disposition to sacrifice the best feelings of human nature to the love of accumulation. To succeed in this the lower orders had been subjected to a real oppression, to a situation

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1. M. Beer, History of British Socialism, Vol.1, (1919), p 183.

ROBERT OWEN

more degraded and miserable than before the new manufacturing methods were introduced. Owen believed that the manufacturers were being "sedulously trained" to buy cheap and sell dear, and that to succeed in this art the parties were taught to acquire strong powers of deception. This spirit, according to Owen, would thus be generated through every class of traders and it would destroy the open, honest sincerity, without which a man cannot make others happy, or enjoy happiness himself. Owen therefore objected to capitalism and competition on the grounds that they were not conducive to happiness because they promoted human character not conducive to such happiness.

It was by no means merely fortuitous that, just when the former basis of community life was being rapidly destroyed, Owen and his followers should have preached the benefits of Co-operation and community of possessions in opposition to the doctrines of private ownership and competition. In the manufacturing towns Owen saw great wealth and great poverty side by side and could not avoid the conclusion that the one was the cause of the other. If the existing system had produced so much misery and destitution a different system based on Co-operation instead of competition might be made to produce the opposite results. His aims went far beyond the mere schemes which were associated with his name; they in many respects embraced the whole future of humanity.

Between 1813 and 1816 Owen wrote four essays entitled "A New View of Society" which set forth his social theory;"Man's character is made for him and not by him," was the central point of his first article. Owen rejected the current philosophy that "people are agents governed by a will formed by themselves and fashioned after their own choice," it is impossible that any human being could or can form his own character. He believed that society was the greater moulder of character which could produce the desired character by adopting the proper means. Education was the proper means, and this commenced with the education of children from the earliest infancy.[1] To Owen, education was the formation of character, it comprehended all that

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1. Owen is regarded by many as the "Pioneer of Nursery Education".

affected a person's life, and it lasted from the cradle to the grave. The practical conclusion, therefore, was that the governing powers of all countries should establish rational plans for the education and general formation of the character of their subjects.

His second essay described New Lanark and the way in which the social evils of the village had been transformed under his management.[1] He demonstrated a reform in which all men and parties could join, a reform in the training and in the management of the poor, the ignorant, the untaught and untrained. The plan was to create a national system of education, and a national scheme of relief works. The third essay explained the system of education adopted at New Lanark for children and for adults. Owen's scheme for national reform is contained in his fourth essay, and he again repeated that his policy intended no interference with the existing vested interests - he declared the necessity of reforming the Church and laws governing the sale of intoxicants, the discontinuance of the state lottery and the revision of the Poor Law. Under Owen's plan the Poor Laws would be substituted by a national scheme of education and training for the working classes which would include a regular census of wages and of totally and partially unemployed workers.

Owen and his views attained some fame and, later, notoriety, particularly those dealing with the unemployed poor. These were expounded in his "Reports" to the Committee of the Association for the Relief of the Manufacturing and Labouring Poor, 1817, and to the County of Lanark, 1821. Owen held that the poor could not only be made self-supporting in Villages of Co-operation set up by the Government, but these being modelled on New Lanark, could and would produce good characters and good citizens instead of the degraded paupers of the existing Poor Laws.[2] Although at first he put them forward as a cure for unemployment and poverty he later advanced

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1. And the Management of David Dale before him. Owen married Dale's daughter.

2. His schemes would cost between £100,000 and £250,000 but he believed this to be less expensive than Poor Laws.

his "Villages of Co-operation" for universal adoption to replace capitalism and competition and provide the conditions for universal happiness, i.e. to replace the "Old Immoral World" by a "New Moral World".

What Owen was trying to do, was to discover "the means by which the condition of the poor and working classes could be ameliorated, and with benefit to their employers".[1] He was convinced that the situation of these classes could be greatly improved, and that their natural powers could be far more beneficially directed for themselves, and for society at large, without creating injury of any kind to any class, or to any individual.

In 1817, he came before the public with a series of addresses at the City of London Tavern in which he set forth the details of his plan for the employment of the poor in "Villages of Co-operation" reproducing many features of his New Lanark establishment and destined in his view to provide a new model for the organisation of society and the production of wealth.[2] Owen's scheme was reproduced in The Times and clearly illustrated the fundamental differences between what he describes as the Existing Manufacturing Towns and his Proposed Villages.[3]

In the existing manufacturing towns the people lived in bad housing conditions and were surrounded by dirt and enveloped in smoke. Parents were oppressed with anxiety to secure the means of subsistence for themselves and their children. Owen was appalled at the conditions and long hours of work experienced by both parents and children. He believed the system led to children being neglected, a neglect that often led to them acquiring bad habits. In contrast to this grim picture, Owen's proposed Villages would see people living in fine

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1. The Times, July 28th, 1817, p 3.
2. Reported in The Times during August and September 1817
3. Saturday August 9th 1817. See Appendix 1-1 for complete scheme.

dwellings, surrounded by gardens. The principle of mutual Co-operation would be understood and practiced and the necessaries and comforts of life would be enjoyed by all in abundance. Working conditions would be pleasant and healthy, nobody working more than eight hours in one day. The children in Owen's village would be clean and properly clothed, well looked after, and prevented from acquiring bad habits. Children would be employed according to age and strength and trained by intelligent persons who possessed only good habits.

This practical scheme for improving the lot of the poor, a scheme that did not threaten revolution, attracted many notable supporters. These included, the Duke of Kent,[1] the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Sidmouth and the Benthamite circle of economists and Utilitarians, viz. Bentham, James Mill, Ricardo, Malthus, Austin, Place, Brougham.[2] However, Owen's attack upon all organised religions in 1817 aroused great enmity and opposition and provided the opportunity for some opponents to attack his views and schemes in general as being atheistical in origin and design. Owen contended that all the established religions were fundamentally wrong because they preached the doctrine of human responsibility for evil, and therefore blamed men for being evil, instead of recognising that the source of social evil lay in the bad environment to which men were subjected.[3] All social relations, he argued, were poisoned by the evil environment and by the mistaken insistence on individual reformation. Thus, he delivered a frontal attack on all the churches as the upholders of the "old immoral world". This view received wide publicity, and it is a fact that for many, it signalled the end of their association with this new Movement. It is also evident that this hostility lingered on for the next few decades.[4]

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1. Father of Queen Victoria.
2. Bentham became one of Owen's partners at New Lanark.
3. He also enraged more people by propagating his unorthodox views on marriage.
4. See Chapter 7, p 251, for the views of Lord Rosebery on this subject.

Hall and Watkins have stated that Owen was a great optimist and always so convinced of his own rightness that he easily assumed that people of wealth and influence would be willing and anxious, when once his plan had been explained to them, to carry it out in practice.[1] It was only when he could make no real headway either with his plan, or with the amelioration of factory conditions by legislation, that he turned to the working classes and offered them the plan as a method of organised self-help.

The appearance in January, 1821 of The Economist was the first evidence that Owen had disciples who seriously intended to popularise his ideas.[2] George Mudie was the Editor, and also a leader of the London Co-operative and Economical society which was the first known co-operative venture in the London area, and according to Cole was the first anywhere to embody a defined "Social Gospel".[3] It was clear to these early co-operators that public opinion had to be re-shaped; the fallacies of the economists had to be exploded and their doctrines replaced by a new teaching emphasising social welfare rather than private wealth; and a more optimistic view of the future of society had to be made to prevail. This was the task of the early co-operative theorists who could see within the existing society great inequality and suffering which they believed could only be banished by a radical change in the social and economic environment.

The problems of unemployment and the value of labour are discussed in detail by The Economist and throw many insights into the ideology of these early co-operators: "Society has lost the control over the power of production" is the clear message expounded by The Economist.[4] They could see that there were hundreds of thousands of

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1. F. Hall and W.P. Watkins, Co-operation, (Manchester, 1938) p 51.
2. The Economist, Vol.1, January 27th 1821 - Edited by George Mudie.
3. G.D.H. Cole, A Century of Co-operation, (Manchester, 1944) p 21.
4. The Economist, Saturday 3rd February 1821, p 26.

wretched human beings who were capable of not only performing all the processes necessary for more than a sufficient supply of their wants, but of producing a large amount of surplus wealth for the benefit of society at large. But, it was felt, that these unfortunate people were not being permitted to rescue themselves from misery and to relieve others because "it is not self-evident to a certain number of individuals (individually considered) that this happy change in the condition of the many could not be injurious to the few".

The Economist believed that the capitalists could, with very little effort, place these men in a situation which would enable them to supply for the satisfaction of their landlords etc. without in any way injuring society and in fact would lead to great advantages for all concerned. All that was required for this purpose was the command over a small portion of land, for which the workers would pay the usual rental, tools and the first supply of raw materials, which they would speedily repay, either in manufactured goods and agricultural produce, or with the money which their goods would command on the open market. It was hoped that their goods, even while they were surrounded by an "erroneously constructed society", would always command a sale due to the economy of the arrangements introduced among them, thus enabling them to dispose of their commodities on very advantageous terms.[1] Owen's influence is very obvious. The great surplus produce of their industry would accordingly be all profit and would either go towards decorating their own homes or to be poured into society at large as the "real wants of the whole nation may require".[2] By this scheme, the unemployed would immediately obtain the command of numerous advantages which they did not possess, and "they will speedily elevate the value of labour, and consequently of man".[3]

It was accepted that in the early days, their joint earnings would not only maintain them all in a situation of much greater comfort than

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1. By much more Co-operation, specialization, economies of scale, etc. The Economist, Saturday 3rd February, 1821, p 26.
2. Surrounding themselves with articles of utility and elegance.
3. The Economist, Saturday 3rd February 1821, p 26.

they enjoyed, but they would be able from the very beginning to employ a portion of their numbers in their own account. Thus it was felt that by manufacturing for themselves and purchasing wholesale at the best markets would give considerable advantages to all who engaged in the scheme. Their weekly income from these sources, and from the earnings of those who continued for a time at their old employments would enable them gradually to extend their operation - acquire machinery, in aid of their domestic and other occupations - to withdraw, in the short space of three or four years, the whole of their members from the "condition of servants" - to secure the independence and happiness of themselves and their children, on a permanent basis, which none of the disorders that existed during this period could ever for an instant disturb.

The Economist believed that the plan for the relief and happiness of all classes, advanced by Owen would reconcile the conflicting interests of society.[1] Indeed, Mudie looked on the scheme as a partnership between agriculture and manufactures, and capital and labour. The London society favoured a commercial centre in the heart of London, without waiting for the organisation of a complete and separate village community so strongly advanced by Robert Owen.

The new society was to consist of 250 families who were to occupy contiguous dwellings. It was proposed that every male member should contribute one guinea weekly to the general fund, out of which would be provided food and clothing for himself and family, education for his children, and all the other advantages afforded by the association such as common hall for meals; common kitchen for preparing food, and joint methods of cleaning the dwellings; commodious schools and a teaching staff. It was also expected that each member of the society would be provided for in sickness and old age, and relieved from all anxiety as to the future of his children, who would be provided for and trained. The communists were to manufacture for themselves many of the articles to be consumed by them, and such members as were not employed by the society were to remain at their present employment.

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1. The Economist, Saturday 17th March, 1821, p 113.

This grand scheme, however, appears to have been too large for the participants, and a more modest programme was decided upon at a general meeting of the society held in May 1821.[1] The new scheme in fact appears in reality to have been the establishment of a store, upon the lines of the present day societies. The store would purchase articles that were required in normal households, at wholesale prices. In order to raise the capital required to start the shop, shares of 5/- each were to be raised by each member.[2] Little information is available as to the success of these first experiments, but it is certain that the idea became popular among workmen, and that several hundreds of distributive and productive societies, resembling this plan were established during the following ten years.[3]

THE FIRST CO-OPERATIVE COMMUNITY

Under Abram Combe's leadership a "Village of Co-operation" was started at Orbiston, in Lanarkshire, in 1825.[4] Combe organised a company in order to raise the funds required. The company, which had a capital of £50,000, divided into shares of £250 each, purchased the Orbiston Estate for £19,995.[5] It was intended to let the estate, and buildings to be erected upon it, to the colonists who would be organised as the Orbiston Community. Building work commenced in March 1825, and by 10th April 1826 about a hundred colonists under Combe's superintendence took possession.[6] Many problems beset this first "Village of Co-operation", the colonists were a heterogeneous collection, little was known of the way the community was to be run, and many

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1. Four months after the original plan had been introduced.
2. Each member to take at least one share, and as many more as he may think proper - and that should the sum in the treasurer's hands at the end of each quarter be more than needed for the society, a portion of the shares would be successively repaid with interest until the whole of the shares be extinguished.
3. The London Co-operative and Economical Society, had by 1823 disappeared.
4. Combe was connected with the Edinburgh Practical Society, founded in 1821, an early experiment said to have conducted a school and evening class for adults.
5. 290 acres from General John Hamilton, whose son A.J. Hamilton was an enthusiastic supporter of the project.
6. F. Hall and W.P. Watkins, Co-operation, (Manchester, 1937), p 62.

expected to be paid ordinary wages and not to work for the community in return for their sustenance. Combe even tried to set a good example by working a few hours every day at trenching a plot of land. The main success of this new venture was in the iron foundry which attracted the skilled men, but unfortunately Combe allowed workers in this department to receive over and above subsistence wages and a share of the profits which he credited to them as share capital. These and many other problems meant that by August 1826 Combe had been put under so much pressure that his health broke, and he was forced to retire to Edinburgh.

Supporters in the community who admired Owen's system advocated holding property in common and the sharing of the results of their labour equally, but this provoked bitter controversy.[1] Amongst the supporters of equal distribution was Alexander Campbell, who later became a leading trade unionist, but even when this principle was introduced in a revised constitution it brought no greater prosperity.[2] All these problems caused the company to lose confidence in the colonists, and it refused to find any more capital for improvements and extensions. With the death of Abram Combe, in August 1827, and creditors breathing down his neck William Combe[3] realised that Orbiston would have to be sold and ordered the community to disband.

It did seem that the communities were not large enough to be efficient and self-sufficient. They had to depend on outside markets in order to maintain themselves. Their power to support themselves was much less than had been imagined, and this suggests that in an industrial world in which division of labour, concentration of industry and the divorce of consumer from producer were becoming even more pronounced, the self-supporting community was out of date even before Owen suggested it, and that if any communities had achieved success and stability for some years they would not have been able in the end to stand against the stream of economic progress. It is significant also that the establishment of such communities would have been against the advancing individualism of the age.

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1. Owen was at this time in America organizing his New Harmony Community.
2. A good harvest in 1827 saw no more than 75 acres being cropped.
3. Who had become superintendant. F.Hall and W.P. Watkins, Co-operation, (Manchester, 1937), p 63.

Whilst Orbiston was painfully experiencing these difficulties in the first "Village of Co-operation" a new publication, the Co-operative Magazine was instituted by the London Co-operative Society, in 1826. The purpose of this London society was not trade but propaganda, and their magazine declared that it did not "propose to support Owenism but to call the attention of the public to the principles of mutual Co-operation and equal distribution of which Mr. Owen is a powerful advocate". Thus when Owen returned from America he found that his plan was not the only conceivable form of Co-operation and his views by no means its theoretical basis. According to Hall and Watkins it was from this time forward that it became possible to discern sincere co-operators who were not fanatical Owenites.[1] Co-operation was not an abstract doctrine privy only to Owen and his followers. It offered a radical alternative to early industrial society and could be dovetailed into a variety of different schemes. The concept formulated by Owen held an immediate intrinsic appeal both to people interested in securing a more equitable distribution of wealth and to those who wished to change the whole economic and social structure of English society.

One of the new co-operative theorists was William Thompson of Cork. Thompson was a member of the Irish landed gentry and he had received his training in moral philosophy under the guidance of, and in the house of, Jeremy Bentham.[2] Among the intellectual influences on Thompson's work were Bentham's conception of the purpose of social organization as the greatest possible sum of human happiness; from Godwin his view of Government, as the organized power of the rich for the plunder of the poor; and his proposals for social reform, the establishment of voluntary communities of workers, from Owen. Since all men may be presumed equally capable of enjoying wealth, he argued that no community would be happier than the one in which the wealth is equally divided amongst its members. Thompson believed that no more powerful incentive to hard work was known than security for the labourer to enjoy all that he produced, or its value.

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1. F. Hall and W.P. Watkins, Co-operation, (Manchester, 1937), p 52.
2. Thompson lived with Bentham for several years.

By force, the capitalist and landlord were able, according to Thompson, to assert a claim, that is, being in possession of the material means of production - land, plant, tools, - they could not merely compel labour to pay for the hire of them, but even buy labour at a price[1] that left the workers no more than barely enough to live on, and sell its produce for whatever it would fetch on the market and pocket the surplus. Starvation was the workers' only alternative to this hard bargain for all the forces of the state were marshalled for the protection of the property owner. Thompson did not hold out much hope for help from the Government whom he viewed as the worst plunderer of all, and unlike Owen he hoped still less for the benevolence of the comfortable classes.

The root of evil was in the economic system. Groups of workers, according to Thompson, were simultaneously engaged in labouring to supply one another's wants. Their employers, the capitalists, were middlemen interposing themselves between these groups and making profits by buying the labour of one group and selling the product to the others. Thompson believed that if the workers could organise themselves without the employer they need no longer pay toll in the shape of profit, but enjoy "the whole product of their labour".

In the Co-operative Magazine Thompson asks the working classes whether they would like to be possessors, in a few years, of land, from which their labour could extract food and materials, of the houses in which they live, of all the machinery and raw materials necessary to render their labour productive?[2] It followed that if the workers wanted things like these they simply had to alter the direction of their labour. Work for each other was Thompson's clear message, and schemes like Owen's self-supporting colony were a means whereby bodies of workers might enjoy the whole product of their labour.

While Owen at one time maintained that almost a quarter of a million sterling was necessary to form a community, and objected

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1. Wages
2. The Co-operative Magazine, November 1826, p 9.

to almost every project because the capital to be raised was insufficient, Thompson held that success was possible on an initial capital of five or six thousand pounds. However even this latter sum was on the face of it too much for any one body of wage-earning workers to hope to get together in a reasonable time, and Thompson, in spite of all his research,was unable to tell them how they might best attempt to do it. Many of these problems were highlighted in the Co-operative Magazine, one such problem was found to arise from the loss of income which the associates sustain upon quitting their occupations in the old society, before arrangements had been made in the new establishment for regular employment, or a market found for the surplus produce.[1] Hence funds were necessary, not only for the erection of the buildings, stocking the farm, and providing raw materials for any manufactures, but also for supporting the families until the first harvest. It was calculated that a community of 200 families, living on twenty shillings each per week, would require £10,400 in one year.

Despite the numerous problems relating to financing communities, the village community idea attracted many working class people at the time, for it promised a considerable improvement in their lot. It promised clean and spacious dwellings, with good surroundings, good food, a shorter working day, pleasant occupations, security against sickness, unemployment and the poverty of old age, widow and orphanhood, and provision for the education and good upbringing of children. Many of the early co-operative theorists believed that the nature of the co-operative system was precisely that of the family system. All the members of the community work according to their abilities and powers, for the common support and happiness of one another, the use in common of the product of their common exertion. Thompson even equated the co-operative system with "Human Happiness", and this view is echoed in the Co-operative Magazine "when knowledge and wealth come to be universally and equally diffused happiness will be universal too. And as to the power of producing unhappiness, it will be utterly overthrown - its only sphere of operation, ignorance

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1. The Co-operative Magazine, March 1828, p 65.

and poverty, will be for ever annihilated".[1]

Another man influencing working men during this 'seed time'[2] of working class ideas was Thomas Hodgskin.[3] Hodgskin, through his books and lecturing work, had a great influence among the circles of London working men and provided the rising movement of the organised workers with a social philosophy and an anti-capitalist economic theory. He believed that the foundation of modern property rights arose from a past division of society into two classes, masters and slaves - a division based on the "right of conquest". To Hodgskin there was nothing "natural" about the supposed economic laws of the Ricardians. They were based on the conventions established by class Government. Sir Robert Peel is described by Hodgskin as "one of the Leviathans who are anxious to retain their power over us, and who, as legislators, either in their own persons or in the persons of their sons, make the laws which both calumniate and oppress us".[4]

Hodgskin, in Labour Defended, and William Thompson, in his Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth and Labour Rewarded, were the first to formulate clearly a criticism and inversion of the Ricardian economic system and so provide a radical economic alternative. They were strongly influenced by Ricardo, whose Principles of Political Economy first appeared in 1817. Upon Ricardo's theory that the amount of labour was the normal measure of value, they built the 'socialist' conclusion that the entire product of labour

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1. The Co-operative Magazine, January 1828, p 34, Article by a gentleman called Overton which was entitled "The Co-operative System - Compatible with the Development of the most useful and energetic motives to human Exertion; and Refutation of a celebrated position of Jeremy Bentham's"

2. According to G.D.H. Cole in the Introduction to Labour Defended Against the Claims of Capital. The Worker's Library, First Series (1922), p 8.

3. Ex Naval Officer, friend of Place and Mill and pioneer of Independent Working Class Education.

4. T. Hodgskin, Labour Defended Against the Claims of Capital, (1825), p 39.

ought to belong to the labourer as the sole creator of wealth. If labour alone creates wealth, the poverty of the labourers, despite the rapid advance in productive efficiency, must be due to the share appropriated by the profit-maker, and the solution must lie in the elimination of profit-making by means of mutual Co-operation among the labourers. This message is clearly advanced in most of the co-operative journals circulating in the 1820's, and can be seen clearly to have influenced the leaders of the Yorkshire Movement.[1] A very clear view of the above position, stated:

> "He who makes the instruments is entitled, in the eye of justice, and in proportion to the labour he employs, to as great a reward as he who uses them; but he is not entitled to a greater; and he who neither makes nor uses them has no just claim to any portion of the produce."[2]

Up to the early days of Chartism, we find Hodgskin lecturing and taking part in working-class meetings; but his name and his popular influence gradually disappear. By the time Chartism had reached its zenith he was almost completely forgotten. It was left for Karl Marx, to re-discover Hodgskin, and to weave his and William Thompson's critique of the classical economists into the system of "Scientific Socialism".[3] The importance of Hodgskin was his powerful influence on the development of working class thought. He stated first, in plain terms the view that capitalism is exploitation, the appropriation by a privileged class, supported by the power of Government, of a part of the product of labour. The views of Thompson and Hodgskin are reflected in the co-operative literature of the 1820's and 1830's and clearly show that Owen was not the only co-operative theorist who influenced the actions of co-operators.[4]

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1. This will be considered in the next Chapter.
2. T. Hodgskin, Labour Defended Against the Claims of Capital, (1825) p 71.
3. In Capital Marx several times refers to Hodgskin and Thompson.
4. The pages of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator are full of the ideas of Thompson and Hodgskin.

However, it is only when Dr. William King enters the debate that Co-operation seems to move from a utopian to a practical framework.[1] In place of the benevolent promoter such as Owen the working man became the needed stepping stone. Bonner believed that King accepted the Owenite hypothesis of increasing misery and also argued that poverty, disease and crime were largely the consequences of the existing economic and social system.[2] Under the existing system King saw that the workers competed with each other and regarded themselves as enemies of each other. Instead, they had to work for themselves and enjoy the whole product of their labour. Thanks to the propaganda of the London Co-operative Society there was in King's home town of Brighton, an exponent of Co-operation; William Bryan, under whose leadership the Brighton Co-operative Benevolent Fund Association was formed in April, and the Co-operative Trading Association in July, 1827.[3] Dr. King realised that the members needed guidance in thinking out their policy and to this end he began in May 1828, the publication, once a month, of a four-page tract, called the Co-operator, in which he explained the co-operative plan of campaign, discussed the consequences of the spread of Co-operation for society at large, pointed out dangerous pitfalls; and suggested a suitable system of education.

"It is capital we want" exclaimed King, "and it is by union and savings that this will be accumulated."[4] King explained in very simple and easily understandable terms that institutions like friendly societies and savings banks had grown, by small weekly deposits, therefore co-operative societies could grow and develop in a similar manner. Once the society was formed a fund would have to be raised by weekly deposits and as soon as this was large enough various commodities would be purchased and placed in a common store, from which

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1. He was acquainted with members of mechanics institutes in Brighton area, 1825.
2. A. Bonner, British Co-operation, (Manchester, 1961), p 23.
3. Took a lease on 28 acres of land which some of its members cultivated as nursery.
4. The Co-operator, May 1st 1828, p 3.

DR. WILLIAM KING.

DR. WILLIAM KING

all members would purchase their common necessaries. Profits from this undertaking would form a common capital to be again laid out in the commodites most wanted. Thus, according to King, the society would have two sources of accumulation, firstly the weekly subscription, and secondly the profit on articles sold. It was demonstrated that if 200 persons were to join the society and subscribe one shilling a week each, and that by also purchasing at their own store a profit of £20 a week would be realised. Thus subscriptions and profits combined would accumulate at the rate of £30 a week, or £1560 a year. King believed that when this stage had been reached it would be possible for the society to find work for some of its members, the whole produce of whose labour would be common property, instead of just a small part.[1] By further capital accumulation it would be possible, in time, to employ all the members of the society. King reveals his ultimate goal as being:

> "... when the capital has accumulated sufficiently, the society may purchase land, live upon it, cultivate it themselves, and produce any manufactures they please, and so provide for all their wants of food, clothing, and houses. The Society will then be called a community ... If we unite, as I have shewn we may do, either in a society or a community, in a few years we shall have the capital, comfort and independence.[2]

King in this first issue of the Co-operator displayed to the workers a scheme that could be put into practice without vast sums being raised from rich benefactors. It is interesting to note that King used the achievements of the friendly and benefit societies to illustrate that his method of capital accumulation was sound. Indeed, William Pare[3] looked upon temperance societies, Sunday

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1. The Co-operator, May 1st 1828, p 3.
2. The Co-operator, May 1st 1828, p 3.
3. Leading Owenite, helped start a mechanics institute, frequent speaker at early Congresses, Vice President of the Association of All Classes of All Nations, Governor of Queenswood Community. Active in Co-operative Congresses of 1870's. A. Bonner, British Co-operation, (Manchester, 1961), pp 496, 497, Appendix 1.

schools, mechanics institutions, benefit societies, and other associations of like nature as being pioneers for co-operatives.

> "A community upon the principles of the social system would combine the advantages of the whole without the inconveniences of any, but was necessary perhaps that they should all exist, before communities could be established".[1]

In concluding this first issue, King's Christian beliefs forced him to draw attention to the moral and religious principles of such a community.[2] He believed that the fundamental basis of such a society was to "love your neighbour as yourself" and that no man but a real Christian was fit for such a community. King, like Owen, was keen to show the working classes the differences that would result if his scheme was adopted, and this he did in the following illustration:

Things as They Are	Things as They May Be
Ignorance	Useful Knowledge
Pauperism	Moral and Religious Principles
Crime	Independence
Envy	Provision for Sickness, Old
Hatred	Age, Widows, Orphans
Malice	Common Labour
All Uncharitableness	Common Property

King accepted the self-supporting and self-governing community as the proper form that Co-operation should take, but his first object was to show working men how they could begin to work towards community organisation, which their lack of capital seemed to place entirely beyond their reach. The great beauty of Co-operation to King was that it could be started without any capital at all, a man wants nothing but his wages and an honest companion.

A letter dated April 12th 1827, and signed W. Bryan informed

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1. Proceedings of the Fourth Co-operative Congress, held October 1st 1832, p 33.
2. The Co-operator, No.1, May 1st 1828, p 3.

the readers of the Co-operative Magazine of the formation of the Brighton Co-operative Benevolent Fund Association, an association designed to raise by small weekly contributions a fund to enable "proper persons" to join co-operative communities. In July 1827 Bryan and his colleagues had formed the Co-operative Trading Association - and within twelve months sales approached £40 per week. The activities of this society became more widely known in the pages of the Co-operator, which seems to have had a wide circulation not only in the South, but in the North of England and was highly praised by Thomas Hirst, the leading exponent of Co-operation in Yorkshire.[1] It is in the pages of the Co-operator that one of the earliest accounts of the establishment of a co-operative society in Yorkshire is detailed.[2] This society was situated in Leeds, and the credit for its formation must go to local benefit societies which had called a meeting to consider the propriety of forming a co-operative trading fund association based on the principle of trading unions.[3] The main speaker at this meeting was William Carson who explained the advantages of co-operative societies and their advantages over benefit societies.[4] Carson spoke about the problems faced by benefit societies, which needed to recruit young subscribers in proportion to the older ones who were removed in the course of nature, or they would be brcken up and ruined. His plan, he believed, would fully meet the evil which they had reason to dread.

Carson felt that following the co-operative path would make the best possible use of the labour of the members who composed the association, and would give every man an opportunity of reaping the fruits of his industry, skill and ingenuity. The scheme proposed by Carson consisted of sixty members of different professions, each paying one shilling per week into the general fund. In a year this would amount to £150, with which they might commence business.

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1. Rochdale Pioneers boasted that they had a complete set.
2. The Co-operator, February 1st 1829, p 1 and p 2.
3. King seems to have got information from an article in the Weekly Free Press dated 27th December 1828.
4. Early Co-operator, active at Congresses held in 1831 and 1832, Missionary, pioneer of wholesaling. T.W. Mercer, Dr. William King and the Co-operator 1828-1830 (Manchester 1922) p 137.

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Within a year the society would be able to go to market, with money to buy the commodities they would require. It would be a fundamental rule of this association that every purchase would be for ready money, so that their profits would be increased by a third due to the discount obtained on their purchases. Like King, Carson used simple examples to explain the benefits to be derived by co-operating. He asked his audience to imagine the consequences if members spent at the rate of 10/- per week each for the various necessaries of life. This would over the year amount to £1500, the profit of which at 10% and 5% for discount, which according to Carson every tradesman would allow, would amount to £234 per year. It was proposed that an Agent would be employed at £1 per week, and that the rent for showroom and premises would be £30 per year. Thus "After deductions the society will have a clear income of £152 a year", a sum that Carson declared to be much higher than the allowance given by any benefit society.[1] Not satisfied with this first example Carson became more specific and chose to examine the economics of beer drinking, in order to show what people gave away in the shape of profit. Each family was assumed by Carson to consume one pint of beer a day at 3d, thus amounting to 420 pints per week for 60 members. Carson said he could produce at 3½d a quart; thus sixty men were giving away profits to the amount of £2.3.9 a week, or £113.15s a year. This simple example could be followed by members, and even after deductions for license fee duty, would derive a profit on beer alone of at least £60 a year. This example could, he believed, be utilized in other directions, such as the employment of a shoemaker member, and if more were manufactured than were needed to supply the society, the article might be taken to the best market and the profits arising from the sale would go into their own funds. Carson was of the opinion that the society should also be able to support a respectable secretary, who would keep the accounts, and be a school master to the children of the members. In his concluding remarks, he urged that the principles of Co-operation should be recognised by the meeting, and carried into immediate execution. This resolution was put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

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1. The Co-operator, February 1st 1829, p 2.

Remarking on Carson's scheme King believed that it contained the "whole principle of the subject. It contains the observations of a practical mind intently fixed on the great object of bettering the condition of himself and his fellow workmen in an honourable manner".[1] King was of the opinion that Carson knew what the necessaries of life were, what their value was, and that if the pence are taken care of, the pounds will take care of themselves. The Leeds scheme gives the economic and social historian an insight into King's economic views when he describes the benefits to be gained by such an institution:

> "It appeals so directly to their immediate self-interest, that they cannot help preferring that kind of labour, which gives them the whole of the produce, to that, which, while it makes others rich, gives to themselves only a starving portion."[2]

King was a very practical man, his was a scheme that would not lead to violent and rapid change, indeed his philosophy was to be the guiding light for the future successful movement. His scheme for working within the competitive system is evident when he even states that "the more competition the better for the more will prices fall, and the more will co-operators be supplied".[3] This view was most probably acceptable to many co-operators, as it would be today, but led William Lovett to attack King for apologising on behalf of the competitive system.[4] This kind of internal bickering was to carry on for the rest of the century between those who wanted to completely reconstruct society and those, like King, who wished to work within the existing system and bring about a more gradual change in the structure of society.

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1. The Co-operator, February 1st 1829, p 2.
2. The Co-operator, February 1st 1829, p 2.
3. The Co-operator, December 1st 1829, p 3.
4. At the third quarterly meeting of the British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge, January 7th 1830. Mercer, op.cit., p 139.

Number twenty eight of the Co-operator informed Co-operators that it was time to draw the series to an end.[1] King tells the reader that the objects for which the paper was commenced had been obtained and the principles of Co-operation been disseminated among the working classes, and made intelligible to them. What was important about Dr. King's co-operative theory was that the idea of cheapening the price of goods by co-operative store-keeping, which came from the common sense of the working classes, is linked to the idea of community organization which came from the utopian vision of Owen and Thompson, by means of the ideas of capitalising the savings of mutual trading and co-operative labour, which appealed to the practical mind of Dr. King. It is very easy to see why Sonnichsen describes King as the "first prophet" of modern Co-operation, whose "vision penetrated clearly the future."[2]

The Co-operative Magazine was well pleased with the state of the Movement in 1830 believing the trading associations to be the stepping stones for the working classes towards Co-operation.[3] Help was so desperately needed, evidence of the failure of the existing system was everywhere to be found. The Editor of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator tells of the plight of one victim of the age.[4] He had been to a public dinner and was returning home at two in the morning with a friend when they saw sitting by the gates of a factory, shivering with cold, a little girl, about seven years of age. On questioning the girl it was revealed that the girl's mother had no time piece and as the previous day the child had been beaten for being late, she was forced to spend the night in this manner. Southey[5] expressed the radical feelings of the age in the Co-operative Magazine:

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1. The Co-operator, August 1st 1830, p 4.
2. A. Sonnichsen, Consumers Co-operation, (1919), p 15.
3. The preface to the Co-operative Miscellany of 1830, stated that there were then upwards of 20,000 persons united in different parts of the Kingdom.
4. Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, No.2, 1832, p 7 - no month given.
5. Southey went on to become editor of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator.

Train up they children, England,
In the ways of righteousness - and feed them
with the bread of wholesome doctrine -
Where hast thou thy mines - but in their industry, -
Thy bulwarks where - but in their breasts, - thy might,
But in their arms,
Shall not their Numbers, therefore, be thy Wealth,
Thy strength - thy Power - thy Safety - and thy Pride,

O! grief then - grief and shame
If in this flourishing land there should be dwellings,
Where the new-born babe doth bring into its parents' soul
No joy! - where squalid poverty receives it at the birth,
And on her withered knees,
Gives it the scanty bread of discontent.[1]

Another force that was promoting Co-operation in the late 1820's was trade unionism.[2] In 1829 John Doherty succeeded in organizing the cotton spinners into a Grand General Union of the U.K., covering England, Scotland and Northern Ireland; and from this he went on to attempt the more ambitious plan of organising all the trades of Great Britain into a National Association of United Trades for the Protection of Labour, which spread from Lancashire over Yorkshire and the Midlands, and according to Cole was the direct precursor of the still more ambitious Grand National Consolidated Trades Union of 1833-4.[3] Doherty's National Association was indeed purely a trade union body; but Doherty was himself an ardent Owenite, and spread the idea of co-operative self-employment far and wide wherever the workers became organised. It became a common thing for strikers, in trades which could be carried on without much machinery, instead of folding their arms, to launch out in competition with their employers on schemes of co-operative production.

Many of the numerous co-operative societies that were founded during the late 1820's and early 1830's were of this kind, either arising out of strikes or directly created by local groups of trade

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1. Co-operative Magazine, 1st October, 1830, p 1.
2. Proceedings of 2nd Co-operative Congress, Birmingham, 1831, pp 15-16. Mr. Hirst showed the difference between benefit and trade societies and political unions and the co-operative societies and that the latter embraced all the objects of the former.
3. G.D.H. Cole, Century of Co-operation, (Manchester, 1944), p 24.

unionists who found their wages beaten down or employment impossible to get. Some of these co-operatives were definitely sponsored by local trade societies; and others were set up with the aid of benefit societies whose members were drawn from a single trade. In other cases little groups of workmen simply clubbed together without any formal backing and started societies on their own. The name "Union Society" or "Union Shop" was frequently given to bodies of all these types. The name "Union Society" was popularized by Dr. King's Co-operator, but it did not originate with the Brighton Movement. "Union" was in fact a word then much in vogue to describe almost any sort of working-class movement animated by a social ideal.

Side by side with these "Union Societies" and "Union Shops" there were Owenite or co-operative propaganda societies, formed as a rule with the purpose of establishing, or joining with others in the establishment of thorough-going "Villages of Co-operation". Co-operative stores arose usually out of societies of this second type. They were founded, not mainly with the object of mutual trade, but rather with that of placing themselves in a position to employ their own members and each consuming their own products or exchanging them for the products of other societies having similar objects. It was thus easy for them to link up with the "Union Shops", for whose products they afforded an outlet, and to turn into "Exchange Bazaars" or "Equitable Labour Exchanges",[1] which endeavoured to arrange for the swopping of the products of one trade for those of another, but usually the idea lying beyond all these partial endeavours was the establishment of an Owenite "Village of Co-operation".

This opening Chapter has shown the early variety of co-operative experience ranging from the crowd action of traditional pre-industrial English society to those displaying a strong ideological position as postulated by Robert Owen. Whether it was a local scheme of practical self-help or a grander plan designed to establish a "Village of Co-operation" co-operative development was inevitably framed to work within the existing economic and social framework. Owen, Thompson,

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1. This matter will be considered in greater detail in Chapter Two of this thesis.

King and Hodgskin advanced radical solutions associated with labour theories of value. What is clear is that Co-operation to them offered the mass of the people a way of escape from exploitation and the miseries of the new industrial society.

CHAPTER TWO

YORKSHIRE CO-OPERATIVE DOMINANCE

EARLY CO-OPERATIVE CONGRESSES

In the early 1830's the number and variety of co-operative experiments show the Movement to have been rich in enthusiasm and enterprise. Its weakness, however, was lack of unity and cohesion. It never succeeded in creating a truly national organisation, but consisted to the end of loosely connected regional groupings. Co-operative periodicals with few exceptions were not official organs but the outcome of individual enterprise. The great majority such as the Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator could not expect more than a local circulation.[1] The law, by making journals reporting news less than 28 days old liable to newspaper stamp duty, practically restricted co-operators to the issue of monthly magazines.[2] Periodicals were generally poorly written, unskilled in the art of editing, and sold at too high a price for working people, and so did less than they might have done to weld the sections of the Movement together. Early Congresses between 1831-1835 represented the highest achievement of the early co-operators in the direction of national unity, and the locations of the Congresses indicate that the Movement was now moving its 'centre of gravity' from the south to the north of England, where, as will be shown, there were specially favourable conditions.

The Congress reports and the pages of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator show that Yorkshire was a very fertile ground for co-operative development, indeed one could argue that the county of Yorkshire was the leading area in terms of leadership and enthusiasm.

Thomas Hirst, Thomas Wilson, John Heaton and the Rev.C.B. Dunn

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1. The Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator was edited by Mr.Craig, the organiser of the Ralahine Community, an originator of agricultural and industrial training schools. He organised the first of this kind of school under the auspices of Lady Noel Byron, at Ealing in 1834. Bonner, op.cit., p 483, Appendix 1.
2. Members of the Leeds Redemption Society found a way of avoiding this duty, by having their periodicals sent via the Isle of Man, whose Government did not levy this duty.

TABLE ONE LOCATIONS OF EARLY CO-OPERATIVE CONGRESSES

	Location	Dates	Year	Chairman
First	Manchester	May 26-28	1831	E. Dixon
Second	Birmingham	Oct. 4-6	1831	R. Owen
Third	London	April 23 - May 1	1832	R. Owen
Fourth	Liverpool	Oct. 1-6	1832	T. Hirst
Fifth	Huddersfield	April 8-10	1833	R. Owen
Sixth	London	Oct. 7-12	1833	R. Owen
Seventh	Barnsley	March 31 - April 4	1834	R. Owen
Eighth	Halifax	April 20-21	1835	R. Owen

Source: A. Bonner, British Co-operation, (Manchester, 1961), p 28.

were the leaders of the Yorkshire Movement.[1] Indeed Hirst and the Rev.Dunn both jointly represented ten societies at the Liverpool Congress in October 1832. But it was Hirst who was to become a leading figure, not just in Yorkshire, but in the rest of England. He was regarded as one of the foremost speakers on Co-operation and in the space of a few years delivered lectures throughout England and North Wales. An immediate impression of the Yorkshire Movement was that it was influenced more by the ideas of King than Robert Owen, this view being reinforced at the fourth Co-operative Congress, chaired by Hirst, when Hirst declared that King "through his 'Co-operator' - had converted hundreds, if not thousands to the cause of co-operation".[2]

Unlike Owen and many of his followers, the Yorkshire leadership were devout Christians, with Methodists and Anglicans joining together to preach their new social gospel. Such specially favourable circumstances certainly assisted the co-operatives in this early phase of development. These men, expounded in their writings, not only their views on Co-operation but raised moral, spiritual and economic questions, their Co-operation embraced the whole spectrum of experiences that faced men. In many ways their views were a social commentary of the age and they saw their role as advancing a new system of social justice and equality. Hirst was the main exponent of the new social order and his religious convictions led to the use of some very colourful analogies.

> "Let me entreat you to keep your eyes fixed upon the ground plan of community, as a second Canaan, and like Moses, anxious to pass the Jordon of Competition and Contention, and that we may rest in a land flowing with milk and honey. This must be very desirable to every thinking mind, when we contemplate the wretched condition of the labouring

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1. Dunn was Curate of Cumberworth, but was by no means the only Church of England clergyman who played an active part in the early Co-operative Movement. The Rev.Dr.Arthur Wade, Vicar of Warwick, was active in Owenite societies and led the monster procession of trade unionists to present a petition to Lord Melbourne against the sentencing of the Tolpuddle Labourers. Bonner, op.cit., p 502.

2. Proceedings of 4th Co-operative Congress, Liverpool, 1832, p 33. This view is further reinforced in an article in Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, No.1 (no month given), (1832) p 9, by D.W.

classes of this country, brought on by a system of competition. That they would begin to see the utility of the Co-operative motto (which I saw at Manchester at our first Congress last May) "every man for every man, himself included." We find, by sad experience, that instead of "every man" being "for every man, himself included", it has been "every man" "against" "every man, himself included". This may be fairly proved in the first place, that the labouring man has been against himself by thinking that houses and land were wealth and that money was wealth, a greater mistake could not be: "Labour is the only source of wealth". Is this not as plain as two and two make four; and what a pity it is that the poor man has been obliged to barter his wealth for so small a profit, having scarcely been a bare subsistence for himself and wretched family. Every time the master has lowered his wages, it has made the wealth of less value" ... Man's labour "will sink under the present state of society lower and lower still and I believe it never will rise again until the great engine of co-operation with its Sampson's strength, shall lift it to its level and its real value ... if "everyman" was for "everyman, himself included," what a happy world should we live in, and when we saw a person who should behold a brother and friend. I would say, then, to every labouring man in the world - co-operate, and wonders will soon be wrought; for what one cannot do, two can, and what two cannot do twenty can; and what twenty cannot do, an hundred can. We will take just one example of co-operation - what has Methodism arose from but co-opration; and what did it begin from, A few pence. What is it now none need ask. If we co-operators had as many factories as there are Methodist chapels in England, we could drive the world before us. They had not their chapels at first; we have no factories. Then, my brethren, let us join heart and hand and make one great effort to obtain buildings and machinery of our own, that we may enjoy the fruits of our own industry".[1]

This was a typical Hirst lecture, embracing his co-operative philosophy. His idea of Co-operation was linked closely with Christianity and he was obviously concerned with the plight of the ordinary worker with whom he came into contact. Hirst, like most co-operators, did not have any faith in Governmental action curing the situation. The workers must work for themselves and gain knowledge - and union combined with knowledge was the most powerful engine by which despotism could be overthrow and good effected. Hirst clearly stated

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1. Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, March 1832, pp 3-4.

also his belief that labour was the only source of wealth, a view that shows the influence of men like Thompson.[1] His conviction in the ultimate success of Co-operation was an inspiration to many co-operators and it is not surprising that he became one of the Missionaries chosen by the second Congress to spread the word of Co-operation.

Huddersfield was to be the centre of the early Co-operative Movement in Yorkshire, although Halifax should not be overlooked, with Thomas Wilson being a very practical and energetic advocate of trading societies.[2] The first co-operative society to be established in Huddersfield was called the "Co-operative Trading Association", in 1829. In the rules of this society the motto on the title page comes from Isaiah: "They helped everyone his neighbour, and everyone said to his brother, be of good courage". It does not appear to have commenced actual business until April 1830 when a manufacturing committee was appointed consisting of seven persons.[3] It was decided to "limit" the number of members to 250, this being a common practice in nearly all early societies.[4] Financial problems seem to have caused a lot of concern to the Huddersfield co-operators, it being necessary to borrow £50 from Charles Wood in November 1829, and in March 1830 the whole committee of thirteen persons signed a promissory note on behalf of the society, in which they jointly and separately promised to pay James Whitestaff a sum of £60.[5] Any prospective member was vetted by the committee; personal communication between the committee and members was believed to strengthen a sentiment of fraternity and association. By 1830, the committee appointed their first full-time salesman at 20 shillings a week, and a clear distinction between the co-operative

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1. Thompson is mentioned more than once in the Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator.
2. Wilson was the President of the Halifax Co-operative Trading Society. Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, No.6, August 1832, p 13.
3. Two brothers were appointed butchers to the society. Co-operative News, Saturday, January 2nd, 1892, p 1.
4. According to Holyoake in the Co-operative News, Saturday, January 2nd, 1892, p 2.
5. In 1831 they borrowed a further sum of £30 from Henry Naylor of Huddersfield. Co-operative News, Saturday, January 2nd, 1892, p 1.

society and private retailers was displayed when Mr. Charles Glendinning was asked to prepare rules for the establishment of a sick society.[1] Propaganda was very important to these early co-operators, members were employed to travel into the countryside to visit other societies, and Holyoake reveals that letters were received from societies in Leicester, Sheffield and Birmingham "of fraternal and business purport."[2]

It is clear that ready money was not always available, and one mode of trading introduced to meet this problem was to purchase from other societies what they had a market for in Huddersfield, and pay for them not in money but in goods of Huddersfield manufacture or that of other societies. The manufacturing society must, by 1831, have been busy, as four persons were appointed to act with nine committee men in the despatch of business in the furnishing, clothing, wool and fancy departments. Progress was measured also by the realisation of a profit of £151 for the year. The growing success of the Huddersfield Co-operative Society attracted the attention of other societies who were eager to match the progress of this Yorkshire society. A society had been established in Rochdale and they soon corresponded with Huddersfield, asking for information and help. The agent of the Huddersfield society, Mr. John Heaton, was therefore appointed to visit Rochdale.[3] Success generated great confidence, the world was at their feet, and without waiting for the gradual accumulation of capital, they decided to apply to the sister of Lord Harewood, or Lady Byron for a loan of £400 to carry on the manufacturing of woollen goods.[4] An interesting feature of this early society was the appointment of what was termed a missionary. The society expected the missionary to visit other societies and collect orders, as well as delivering lectures explaining the principles of Co-operation. Hirst was the man selected

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1. At first the age of members was not to exceed forty, afterwards this was extended to fifty years. Co-operative News, Saturday, January 2nd, 1892, p 2.
2. Co-operative News, Saturday, January 2nd, 1892, pp 1-2.
3. Rochdale footing the Bill. Co-operative News, Saturday, January 2nd, 1892, p 2.
4. Wife of the famous poet, she communicated with Hirst for over a year.

a move that was to prove beneficial for not only the Huddersfield society but also the whole Movement.

Hirst was delegated by his own society to attend the second Co-operative Congress held in Birmingham, during October 1831. He made an immediate impact on this Congress, taking a very active part in the debate concerning co-operative missions.[1] It was clear to Hirst that men were wanted who could tell the different societies how to overcome their difficulties, men who could also give a "practical lecture as well as a theoretical one". He was able to inform Congress that the Huddersfield society had already been active in disseminating information, and that £20 had been expended in sending letters to different societies throughout England.[2] Mr. Nicholson, a delegate from Halifax echoed the sentiments of Hirst for he himself had found that information was very much wanted.[3] The dedication of these early co-operators is captured in the way they tried to extend the principles that they believed would defeat the evils of existing society. Hirst and other members of his society would travel nine or ten miles to lecture in the evenings and walk back again afterwards, sometimes not reaching home until the morning.[4]

It was with almost religious zeal that Hirst and the Rev.Dunn approached their missionary journeys throughout the country. Within the space of a few weeks Hirst had made three missionary tours, visiting the neighbouring townships of Thurstonland, Stocksmore, Shepley, Cumberworth and Armitage Bridge.[5] These three tours in early 1832, were

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1. Proceedings of Second Co-operative Congress, October 1831, p 5.
2. Support for missions in Huddersfield revealed that of 150 members, not more than 5 objected.
3. Nicholson cited a case in which he attended a meeting held for forming a society, and one of the chief questions asked on electing a member was "Are you a real Radical Reformer". Source: Proceedings of Second Co-operative Congress, October 1831, p 6.
4. Sheet One, Chapter 5 displays a 10 mile radius of Huddersfield, this contains the vast majority of early societies; and one could be forgiven if we deduce that Hirst could have been responsible for the establishment of many of these societies.
5. He visited many of these locations on each of his three tours.

not confined to Yorkshire, they involved Hirst crossing the Pennines where he delivered lectures in Manchester, Worsley, Warrington, Lamberhead Green, Liverpool, Runcorn, Chester, Flintshire, Radcliffe Bridge, Rochdale and Newchurch.

A lecture was held in Huddersfield on Monday, 19th March 1832 at which the Rev. Dunn addressed what was described as a numerous and highly respectable audience.[1] Hirst followed Dunn with his usual powerful and popular oratory, and the final speaker was Mr. Jackson of the "Association for Removing Ignorance and Poverty".[2] Hirst followed up this lecure by travelling to Halifax the following day where he delivered an address to 1000 people assembled in the Lecture Room. The third lecture to be delivered in three days was held in Bradford on the evening of March 21st, a pace that is to be wondered at in an age of poor communications, again indicating the dedication of these early co-operators.

At the third Congress, held in London, in April 1832, Hirst and Dunn were chosen with six others to be missionaries. In typical fashion Hirst lost no time in putting his appointment to good use, and embarked immediately on a lecture tour of London. Together with the Rev. Marriott and William Carson, Hirst lectured at various places in London including the Institute, 59 Poland Street, Gothic Hall, New Road and Theobalds Road, Camberwell, where a society of thirty-six members was formed.[3] According to the Owenite periodical The Crisis these lectures made a strong impression on the minds of the people who had crowded to hear the "rude eloquence" of the "countrymen".

The two missions that followed the London Congress show the extent to which the Movement had developed, and the convictions held by Hirst and Dunn. When Hirst visited Leicester he not only gave lectures but also looked over the proposed site of a community on behalf of the

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1. Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, No.2, April 1832, p 14.
2. One of Robert Owen's organisations.
3. The Crisis, Vol.1, No.14, June 23rd 1832, p 55.

Congress, which seems to indicate that the community issue was still in the minds of the Movement. At his lecture in Leicester he revealed to a crowded meeting that the Movement had received many offers of assistance from people in the "upper walks of life".[1] But his main message was clear; "Community of property equality of rights and privileges - these are the fundamental principles of our system". What Hirst said he wanted to accomplish was: "That state in which everyman shall sit under his own vine and his own fig-tree, and none daring to make him affraid". From Leicestershire Hirst moved on to Lane End in Staffordshire where on the 18th May 1832 he addressed a meeting reputed to have been 700 strong.[2] His popularity forced him to stay over in order to address a meeting in the Town Hall on May 19th, and not only was the Town Hall full, but also the adjacent square where 2,000 people assembled.[3] Hirst seemed to be attracting considerable attention as he travelled through the Midlands and the North of England, but he was by no means the only attraction, with the Rev.Dunn establishing himself as a popular orator. Indeed, it was not every day that ordinary workers could listen to a clergyman of the Church of England attacking the established order.

The Crisis records the Sheffield co-operative meeting, at which a large audience of both sexes received tea and refreshments and listened with great interest to the speech of the Rev.Dunn. Dunn informed his audience that he was an advocate of a cause that would make"the timid bold". He stated that he lived in a state of comparative affluence and independence. But even with these worldly advantages he was not happy and that his natural sympathies were "agonized every moment of my existence, by the distressing haunting thought, that the majority of my countrymen are suffering from the

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1. This point will be explained in the Section on Lady Byron's letters.
2. Some of attendance figures seem very high in comparison to monies made in collections.
3. The Crisis, vol.1, No.14, June 23rd, 1832, p 56. It was reported that the society in the town was to start manufacturing crockery ware of every description.

effects of increasing toil and increasing poverty". Co-operation, he believed, proposed remedying all the moral, political and commercial abuses and disorders that were preying upon society. Dunn attacked those "waiters upon Providence" who were waiting for the landed aristocracy parcelling out their estates impartially amongst the very individuals whom they were treating with the utmost insult, derision and contempt. In fact he had told ordinary people not to expect any change in their condition as a result of the Reform Act, and that the causes that were operating so much against them would still exist.[1] Any changes would, according to Dunn, only give increased facilities to the masters and manufacturing capitalists to bring about a further reduction in wages, and that the stream of wealth would still continue to flow in "that unnatural channel in which it has hitherto proceeded".

Dunn's language is not what one would expect from a Anglican clergyman and his attacks concerning the state of society would have done credit to a person like Hodgskin, especially when he attacks what he described as the unnatural monster of monopoly and power which he concluded was prepared to sacrifice the workers to the demands of its "insatiable rapacity". He believed that no other institution was in nature so essentially religious as the Co-operative Movement, being a practical development of the whole system of pure and primitive Christianity. It, according to Dunn, anticipated the establishment of a condition of social equality, in which there would exist "a community of interests, a community of happiness, and a community of wealth". He could not see in the nature of things how an enlarged and enlightened benevolence could co-exist with the spirit of Co-operation.

"I thank my God that he has called me out of a proud and selfish world, to become the messenger of universal peace, philanthropy, and love". The views of Dunn were to help the Yorkshire Movement to remove some of the stigma that had been attached to Co-operation since Owen's views on Christianity were made public.

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1. This was at a Co-operative Meeting held in his parish of Cumberworth - article appearing in the Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, Issue 6, July 1832, pp 8-11.

Hirst, however, could be described as a charismatic character, the sort of leader that any Movement must produce if it is to capture the imagination of the people. This magnetism was captured by the Editor of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator when he accompanied Hirst on the next Tour which started at Holmfirth on Tuesday, June 5th, 1832: "We accompanied him to some of the places at which he gave lectures in his neighbourhood, and can bear testimony to the extraordinary sensation which his peculiar, yet animating oratory and force of argument are capable of creating".[1]

Thomas Hirst left Holmfirth on Tuesday, June 5th, 1832, and travelled by foot to Silkstone, a journey of over ten miles, where he was met on the road by a large number of people, headed by a band of music. It seems that there was some opposition to Hirst amongst the shopkeepers, as one of the trustees of the Methodist chapel, a shopkeeper by trade, refused to hand over the keys to the building which were in his possession. This limited hostility however did not deter Hirst, who promptly delivered his lecture on the steps of the chapel, and at the close of the lecture a society was formed.[2] The next lecture was held in Barnsley on June 7th, in a large school room belonging to the Primitive Methodists, again showing the close association between this new Movement and Methodism. The tour moved on again, and Hirst's presence was announced to the people of Ardsley by a member of the local society touring the streets jingling a frying pan.[3] This tour then again moved across the Pennines into Lancashire where Hirst visited Manchester, Liverpool, Runcorn and Bolton, giving often more than one lecture in each town. Words were turned into action at almost every stop, and a correspondent from Bolton stated that as a consequence of "the excellent lecture" delivered by the Yorkshireman, four societies had been formed in that town.[4] If this response was followed in other

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1. Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, No.1, March 1832, pp 5-8.
2. Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, July 1832, No. 6, p 5.
3. Ardsley apparently not having a printer or bellman.
4. Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, No.1, March 1832, p 15.

towns Hirst visited, it is reasonable to assume that he was responsible for the formation of a large proportion of societies established in the early 1830's.

The two great co-operative missionaries did much to dissociate the early Movement from unchristian views, yet both were obviously great believers in many of the views expressed by Robert Owen.[1] But their greatest service to Co-operation, especially Hirst, was the dissemination of useful and practical information.[2] Hirst in many respects was performing the same function, albeit on a much more modest scale, as the Rochdale Pioneers did less than a decade later; in fact he most probably influenced the very men who would help to establish the successful Co-operative Movement of the 1840's.[3] Hirst and other activists were operating, in many respects, in isolated ignorance. New problems beset their new businesses with regular monotony. Each problem encountered at local level had to be resolved before energy could be expended on the wider problems facing all new societies.

The need for missionaries is further reinforced when we consider the diverse characteristics of the early societies that were established. At the second Congress the Rev. Marriott expressed concern at the variance between some societies' laws. Certain societies allowed for the division of profits to members and others were not favourable to community on the land as an ultimate goal. Marriott could well have had a society like Kirkheaton in mind, which was formed in 1824.[4] Originally it had been run as a hand-loom weaver's shop; the goods being sold included pickers, shuttles and swifts for the weavers of the Kirkheaton district. Handloom weaving was the staple industry of the district in those days, and was carried on in

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1. Both obviously believed in Community on the land as an ultimate goal.
2. Proceedings of Fourth Co-operative Congress, October 1832, p 15. Hirst said at this Congress that he had spoken at meetings in London, Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cheshire and Westmorland and in some instances he had addressed between 6,000 to 10,000 people, some in the open air.
3. Chapter 4, p154, 155 assessed why these earlier attempts were not as successful as the societies established post 1844.
4. The Producers, June 1934, p 188.

the cottages around. Handlooms requiring new parts with tolerable frequency, this meant that the weavers were constantly having to go to Huddersfield to buy new parts. It would appear that the weavers realised what an unproductive practice this was and that if they could find a way to fetch, in one journey, all the parts they would require, and then retail them out, it would be of great benefit to all concerned. Thus a scheme seems to have been devised in which goods were fetched in turn, and probably all those in the combination shared whatever the profits there may have been.[1]

As far as can be judged the purpose of the promoters was their own convenience plus any profit that might result from the transactions engaged in. There were one or two small shops in the village, but the store was frequented by persons wishing to become shareholders from miles around the place. All customers were welcome, but the promoters feeling that they had got hold of a good 'money spinner' became gradually more and more determined to keep it to themselves. They formed what might be called a "close corporation".[2] The entrance fee for membership was fixed at £6, an enormous sum in those days; this sum of £6 when it was placed to the credit of an intending shareholder had to remain in the society for five years, at interest only, before the fortunate individual was able to share in the profits. Considering that all the customers were hand loom weavers, working hard in their little cottage homes for small pay, these terms were prohibitive. The net profits were shared equally by all the shareholders, quite irrespective of the amount of their purchases, and were received by them in cash. The larger the number of customers and the greater the profits, the higher were these cash bonuses, and the more satisfied with their position became the few shareholders.

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1. In 1828, application was made for a tea dealer's licence, this being issued in the name of Joseph Roebuck, a hand-loom weaver who, with David Johnson, seems to have been the leading spirit behind the society. The Producer, June 1934, p 188.

2. According to the Handbook of the 27th Congress, Huddersfield, 1895, p 109.

The system operated at Kirkheaton, resulted in the strange anomaly of certain shareholders actually drawing more in profits than the amount they had spent in purchases. Apparently two bachelor brothers, living in a small cottage by themselves, and having modest requirements, both being shareholders, spent the last few years of their lives practically as annuitants upon the funds of the society, their share of profits being much larger than the amount they spent in purchases. Another development at Kirkheaton was that in these early days the manager alone managed the society, and the committee meetings were largely a farce. The popularity of the manager depended entirely upon the amount of profits he made, and if these were not kept up suspicion and distrust were aroused. It is clear that the Kirkheaton society was not the odd man out; the Rev. Marriott was clear in his mind that many societies were far from being agencies for the elevation of the working classes. Thus, one of the most important decisions of the second Congress was to recognise the problem, and to rectify the matter a committee was established to draw up rules and regulations for co-operative societies.

At the third Congress held in April 1832, this committee presented their report.[1] The presentation of this all important document was entrusted to the Rev.Dunn, and it was held that the adoption of these fundamental rules and regulations was the only constitutional basis upon which successful societies could be permanently established. The first rule was central to these early co-operators, even if it did not come into being:

> "Let it be universally understood, that the grand ultimate object of all co-operative societies, whether engaged in trading, manufacturing, or agricultural pursuits, is community on land".

The second rule dealt with the way the capital was raised for such a community. It was suggested that a weekly subscription, either in money,

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1. Proceedings of Third Co-operative Congress, March 1832, p 102 - "Regulations for Co-operative Societies."

goods, or labour, from a penny to any other amount is needed and this to be continued from year to year until sufficient capital is accumulated to accomplish their object as laid down in rule one. The third rule, auxiliary to the former, was to purchase at wholesale prices the articles of ordinary consumption that would be retailed at market prices, for the purpose of further accumulation. The adoption of these instructions would, it was accepted: "be regulated by the circumstances and inclinations of particular societies". The fourth rule concerned the need for mutual employment of members, the establishment of schools for the education of children, and of libraries and reading-rooms for adults. A fifth rule, was in fact designed to ensure that the main object, "community on land", was achieved. This rule stated that the capital accumulated by such associations should be rendered indivisible, and that any trading societies formed for the accumulation of profits, with the view to the merely making a dividend thereof at some future period, could not be recognized by Congress as "Identified with the Corporative world, not admitted into the great social family which is now rapidly advancing to a state of independent and equalized community".[1] Rule six expressed the view that it was essential that all trading transactions by co-operative societies should be for ready money, and that credit should be neither taken nor given. This rule implied that many societies had been destroyed by giving credit, and thus "banefully operated to retard the general progress of co-operation". The committee were honest enough to accept that distress was not uncommon, and that members of a particular society could find themselves unemployed through no fault of their own. Thus they recommended that in cases of want of employment among the members, means should be taken by that society, if possible, to provide them some employment, as local circumstances may admit. And that in cases of sickness, should there be no other sources of relief, pecuniary assistance could be given either from the funds belonging to the society, or from individual subscriptions amongst the members. The seventh and final rule deemed it injurious to the Movement to permit an individual who is already a member of one society to become a member of another.[2]

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1. Stress being placed that this was the unanimous decision of the delegates. Proceedings of Third Co-operative Congress, London, March 1832, p 103.

2. Owen chaired this meeting.

It is clear from these rules that the ideas of Owen and King are welded together into a practical scheme for social and economic advancement. Southey aptly described the Movement during this period as "a slip of Owenism grafted upon a sound sense stock".[1] Owen's scheme that started at the top was regarded as the ultimate aim of co-operators, but that to achieve that objective an approach, similar to that advocated by Dr. William King, would be the safest and most practical course. This view had in fact been accepted by the second Congress when Hirst advanced the view that if the societies' "feelings and judgements" were concentrated to one point at a time, the sooner would one get to community.[2] Hirst saw that some societies had begun building at the top instead of the bottom, and the natural consequence was, that they worked downwards. Thus the new theorists believed that they had ascended one step of the co-operative ladder, and reached the second, and if they persevered success would be certain. A gradual programme of change was therefore proposed by the committee, and their report was unanimously adopted by the delegates. A loose collection of societies had become a Movement, and the missionary with his courage and zeal could now give a clear and unified picture of what Co-operation was, and what it could mean to the ordinary English worker.

The third Congress also marked the independence of the Movement in not accepting the doctrines of Owen as the only true form of Co-operation. Again Hirst was a central figure in urging member societies not to be associated with any abstract doctrines.[3] Hirst accepted to a certain degree that circumstance influenced the formation of character, but he denied that they had absolute power. The Yorkshire missionary was convinced that many people were driven away from Co-operation by supposing it to be a system of infidelity. Thus what is important to note is that the Movement had a definite framework from

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1. The Christian Socialist, No.10, Vol.1, p 78, 4th January,1851.
2. Proceedings of Fourth Co-operative Congress, Liverpool, October 1832, p 10 - "Debate on Incipient Community."
3. Although Hirst and most other co-operators openly praised the help Owen had given to the Movement.

which they could develop a successful model of Co-operation, and it was a model that did not offend the religious tenets of the age. The Yorkshire Co-operators clearly played a major role in the creation of a central organisation and were also to pioneer most forms of co-operative production.

ASPIRATIONS OF THE YORKSHIRE CO-OPERATORS

The Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator was published between 1831-32 and was most probably the most detailed, in terms of local developments, of all periodicals relating to Co-operation. The Editor defined Co-operation as, literally, working together "union is strength in all cases and without exception".[1] He clearly saw that by working for others working men only received a small part of the produce of their labour, ranging from one quarter to one eighth. It was therefore argued that if they worked for themselves they would get the whole product. "Union and saving" was the formula advanced by Craig, and his method was that everybody needed to go to the shops every day to buy food and necessaries - why then should it not be their own shop? This reasoning also applied to schooling; Craig thought that in their own school they could bring up their children so that they would learn useful trades, and "make them good workmen and sober lads". Girls would also be trained in useful work such as manufactures that might be beneficial to society. The Editor was convinced that if people united, either in a society or a community, in a few years they would have capital, comfort, and independence. Southey believed that the benefits the co-operators would derive from these associations, if they reached the highest stages of success, were

> "1st, A perfect emancipation from all fear of poverty, a sure provision for themselves not only in health and activity, but in sickness and age, and for their families after their death. 2nd, A sufficient supply of the comforts of life, without that hard and incessant labour which now wears them out prematurely. 3rd. Leisure for innocent enjoyment, the acquisition of knowledge, and the cultivation of their

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1. E.T. Craig - very active at Ralahine, was the first Editor of this publication, and was followed by Southey, the Poet Laureate.

> minds in fine, great and lasting improvement in not only their physical, but their moral and intellectual condition".[1]

Like King, the Editor advocated weekly subscriptions and profits on articles sold as being the two sources of accumulated capital. A society of 200 members with a shop would soon be able to find work for some of its own members, the whole product of whose labour would be common property, instead of one quarter or one eighth.[2] Once all the members were employed, when capital had accumulated sufficiently, land would be purchased and the members would live upon it, cultivate it, and produce manufactures, and so provide all their wants of food, clothing, and houses. The society would then be a community.

These objectives listed in the first issue of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator are clearly reflected in the actions of many societies that were to be established in the two counties.[3] The Skelmanthorpe society stated that:

> "The object of this society shall be to raise from time to time by subscriptions amongst the members thereof, or by voluntary contributions, or donations, or loans, or trading, and to find employment, educate, and instruct all its members, which subscriptions, etc., shall be applied as follows, first, for relief in sickness, and find employment for all its members, or the purchase or rental of lands whereon to erect suitable dwellings or other buildings, or for the purpose or rental of dwellings or other buildings where in the members shall by united labour support each other, under every vicissitude, including the establishment of schools for children, or any other purpose not unlawful, by these and every other means consistent with honesty and impartial justice to arrange the powers of production, distribution, consumption, and education, in order to produce among the members feelings of pure charity, and social affection for each other, and practically plant the standard of peace and good will on earth towards all men".[4]

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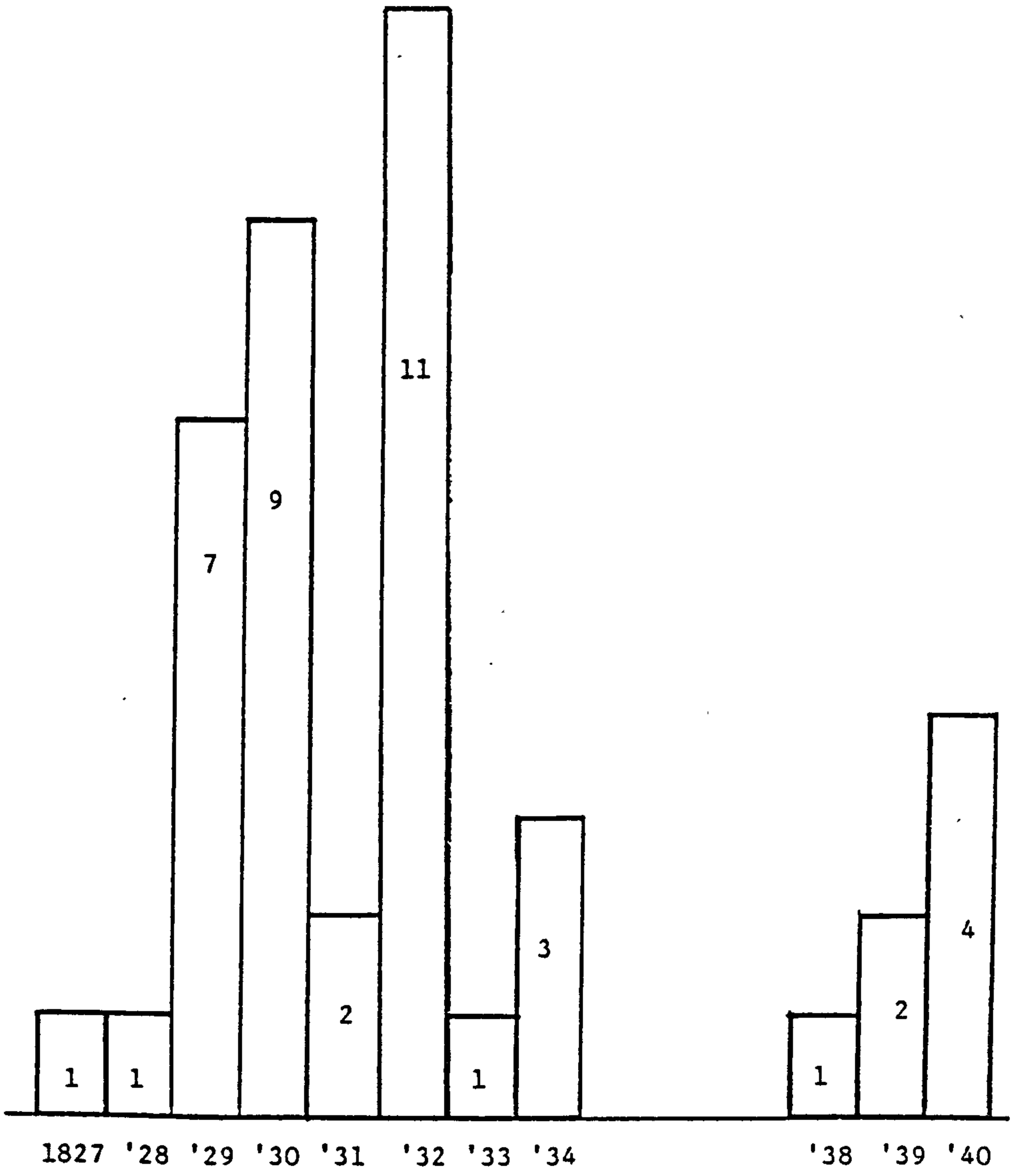
1. Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, January 21st, 1832, p 5.
2. Store producing £20 a week profit, and 1/- a week subscriptions = £1506 a year.
3. Fig 1. lists dates of establishment of Yorkshire Co-operative Societies.
4. 'Preamble to rules of Skelmanthorpe Co-operative Trading Friendly Society, established February 1834." H. Lawson, Centenary Souvenir 1834-1934: Skelmanthorpe Industrial and Co-operative Provident Society Ltd., (Manchester, 1934) p 15.

FIGURE ONE DATES OF FORMATION PRE-ROCHDALE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT



Dates of formation not known for the following societies: Dewsbury (Pre Oct.1831); Horbury, Holdsworth, Mixenden Stones, Dolphin, Mixenden Rocks and Shibden (all pre 1835).

The sick Brief of the Skelmanthorpe Society also displayed the type of society these pioneers were trying to establish:

> "That as this brief is established for the mutual benefit of all its members in sickness and in case of accident and to lighten the bed of affliction until all the members of the Co-operative Friendly Society become as one family, having but one interest and living in community then the cause for separate funds will cease".[1]

This society was clearly intended to be more than a co-operative store. It embraced all the early aspirations of co-operators, it transcended the mere accumulation of capital, it would emancipate them from the old immoral world and give them hope for the future. These aspirations were shared by many other societies in Yorkshire, with the Ripponden Society seeing the object of their society as being firstly the mutual protection of all their members against poverty, secondly the attainment of a greater share of the comforts of life, and thirdly the attainment of independence by means of a common capital.[2] Ripponden saw that one of the means of obtaining these objectives was by living in community with each other under the principles of mutual Co-operation, united possessions, equality of exertions, and of the means of enjoyments.[3]

Nearly all the pre-Rochdale societies seem to have supported, in principle, the establishment of co-operative communities.[4] Huddersfield again seems to have been the most active society, and indeed were visited by Mr. Vandeleur who gave an account of his efforts for establishing some system of comfort for the poor inhabitants on his

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1. Rule One. Lawson, op.cit., p 22.
2. The Ripponden Society was established in 1832.
3. J.H. Priestly, The History of the Ripponden Co-operative Society, (Halifax, 1932), p 31.
4. Even though, at the fourth Congress, held in Liverpool, societies thought it was impolitic and impracticable to establish communities immediately. Proceedings of Fourth Co-operative Congress, October 1832, p 29.

Irish Estate.[1] Hirst said that community was the principal object of their pursuits at Huddersfield, and that a few of their members would take some land in the neighbourhood of Huddersfield, upon a loan for ever, with power to purchase at a stipulated price.[2] He informed Congress that the Huddersfield society had received the offer of a loan amounting to £1500 at 4% interest, by a person who understood the co-operative system well and who had studied the best means of putting it into practice.[3] Furthermore in the unlikely event of failure, this gentleman would guarantee them from all loss. Nothing seems to have come of this scheme, but Hirst had not given up, and within a few months had formulated a new scheme.

In 1833, Hirst corresponded with Mr. Francis Trench and advanced a scheme which he viewed as being more practical than those of Mr. Owen.[4] In the first instance it was proposed to rent 150 or 200 acres of land with power to purchase, somewhere in the manufacturing districts, and put on it a number of "intelligent and industrious" agriculturalists as an experiment, in order that the societies in that

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1. Owen visited Ireland in 1823 and lectured in Dublin. He seems to have converted John Scott Vandeleur, an Irish Landlord with estates in County Clare. In 1830 Vandeleur began to erect buildings that might serve as homes and workshops for his tenants if they could be organised into a Co-operative community. In November 1831, Vandeleur explained his scheme to a meeting of tenants. All the residents of the Ralahine estate were to become members of the Ralahine Co-operative Agricultural and Manufacturing Society of which Vandeleur was to be President and Craig Secretary. A store was opened for the supply of members personal requirements, wages were paid in Labour notes exchangeable at the store, but members could obtain cash for the notes if they wished to spend elsewhere. Prosperity was achieved - a schoolmistress employed. In November 1833, there fell a bolt out of the clear sky. News came that Vandeleur had gambled away all his property and had fled the country. His creditors seized the estate. The estate in the end passed into the hands of another family of Vandeleurs who reintroduced the old steward system (source: F. Hall and W.P. Watkins, Co-operation, (Manchester, 1937), p 64.

2. Proceedings of Fourth Co-operative Congress, October, 1832 p 28.

3. Apparently this man had been with Owen at New Lanark, had visited Orbiston, and had foreseen its inevitable failure.

4. A confidential friend of Lady Noel Byron, who was then at her seat at Fordbrook; contained in an article that appeared in Co-operative News, Saturday January 30th, 1892, p 110.

district could act in concert with them, find them a market to consume their produce, and interchange it for co-operative manufactures. Hirst believed that by this method the agriculturalists and local societies would reinforce each other, until such times as a manufactory could be built on the estate, to furnish all the necessary clothing. Thus instead of wanting £250,000[1] as Owen asserted, Thomas Hirst believed that £10,000, under proper management and due economy, together with the well directed industry of the people, would give an enlightened public a practical proof of what co-operation, properly directed, was capable of accomplishing.[2] Hirst was obviously well informed regards Owen's costly scheme, and in many respects was introducing a scheme that was very similar to those advanced by William Thompson. It could be that Thompson was the mystery gentleman referred to above, for he was acquainted with New Lanark and Orbiston; however no definite evidence is available to confirm this theory. But even with this more practical scheme nothing seems to have materialised, it was never put into operation, or even got beyond the planning stage. Community ideas still remained a dream in the eyes of the next two generations of co-operators.

Not all societies, as stated, were much interested in communities, and some had very different views from those expressed by Hirst. The Cumberworth Co-operative Society thought that there was very little chance of an agricultural community succeeding in a manufacturing area.[3] Their analysis was almost an exercise in the economics of comparative advantage.[4] Let us concentrate on manufacturing and allow those areas with more favourable attributes concentrate on farming, this was the

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1. This figure seems to go up and down, with £100,000 often being stated.

2. And furnish those proofs which Mr. Owen's speculations had failed to produce. Proceedings of Fourth Co-operative Congress, October I832, p 30.

3. Proceedings of Fourth Co-operative Congress, October 1832, p 41.

4. If agricultural products are cheap in Region A and manufactured goods cheaper in Region B, A will specialize in agriculture and B in manufactured goods, and exchange will take place to their mutual advantage.

Cumberworth message. Cumberworth thought that if their views were accepted, and put into operation, it would not be long before they would be co-operating with their "agricultural brethren on the fertile banks of the Vistula, and may be by then, we may be sending our steam vessel, Co-operative the First, to deliver her cargo of hardwares and cotton and woollen, etc., etc., on the Quay of Dantzic, and come home again loaded with all the farming produce from the four corners of the world." These early co-operators, as displayed by the Cumberworth society, were obviously not just thinking of today, their romantic ideas were in many respects a cry for help. And the community issue was used as a panacea for a whole string of related evils that were affecting the ordinary worker in society.

One very clear fact that comes from this new social Movement in Yorkshire is that it was not simply a reactionary force. It did not, for instance, blame machinery for all the evils of society. Machinery was not regarded as the enemy of the working classes, but the way in which that machinery was controlled was. John Heaton of Huddersfield echoed the views of many co-operators when he remarked that although machinery was not the natural enemy of man if properly applied, it had nevertheless produced great distress amongst working men by throwing them out of employment and permanently reducing wages to bare subsistence levels.[1] Heaton went as far as sympathazing with labourers who "erroneously conclude that machinery was one of the greatest curses by which they were visited, and proceed as did the Luddites in the North and the Swingites in the South to demolish it". The Yorkshireman believed that this reaction would not be pursued if Co-operation was more generally diffused, which would instruct them how to make "that which they conceived their greatest enemy, their greatest friend". Heaton, and the majority of early co-operators believed that it was in a co-operative community that machines could be made to work for all, instead of for the few "overgrown capitalists".[2] In a community, it was

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1. Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, October 1st, 1831, pp 4-5.
2. Hirst denied that machinery was the cause of distress - it was the ill-directed operations of machinery - Monopoly had destroyed trade. Proceedings of Third Co-operative Congress, London, 1832, p 35.

suggested, the workmen would hail them as the means of increasing their comforts and at the same time decreasing their working hours.

The debate on machinery is also closely associated with the labour theories of value. Heaton believed that the labourers were dazzled with the existing artificial forms of society. In clear and understandable language he asked the workers to consider £1000 worth of produce (wool) and how it acquired value. His clear answer was that it acquired value only as it became impregnated with labour. Thus labour was the only source of wealth was the message Heaton was trying to put across to workers.[1] To remedy this situation he cites the form of Co-operation operated in Huddersfield, that by weekly subscriptions and trade had allowed fourteen of their members to work for the society on its own capital. Also, it was to eliminate the middleman - the capitalist - that drove the co-operative societies into exchanging their products with the products of other societies.[2] The greatest difficulty that Heaton saw in this course of action was the disposal of the products, and he thought labour exchanges could be a solution.[3]

The extent of co-operative production was clearly shown at the fourth Congress held in October 1832, where the committee had taken the spacious Assembly Room belonging to the Hotel, for the purpose of opening a bazaar for the sale of co-operative manufactured produce.[4] There was reported to have been sixty yards of tabling arranged round

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1. Heaton also saw that under competition markets soon became filled and glutted, during filling the workmen might be comparatively well off, but Heaton was aware that there comes a reaction, and prices and wages fall.

2. A sub-council meeting in Halifax, July 1832, resolved "That this meeting highly approves of the system of labour exchanges, as far as practicable, with each other, as individual members, in our own respective societies, and more especially, as co-operative societies and co-operative districts, and are determined to carry it into practical operation to the extent of our ability. Source: Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, August 1832, p 8.

3. Labour exchanges are considered in more detail later in chapter

4. King's Arms Hotel, Castle Street, Liverpool.

the room, the whole of which was covered with articles which had been produced by the societies that had commenced manufacturing. Thus there were woollen cloths, etc. of all descriptions from Huddersfield; Marseilles bed quilts from Bolton; linens from Barnsley; checks, diapers, etc. from Newark and Ardsley; printed cottons from Birkacre; net, lace and cotton and worsted hose from Loughborough, Hathern and other parts of Leicestershire; ribbons from Foleshill, near Coventry; stuffs, merinos etc. from Halifax; flannels and blankets from Rochdale; shoes from Kendal; tools and cutlery of all kinds from Sheffield. The statistical tables compiled for the fourth and fifth Congresses give a clear picture of the extent of co-operative production throughout the country.[1] Table Two shows that 11 of the 17 Yorkshire societies represented at this congress were in fact producing articles, Ardsley was manufacturing linens, checks, diapers and tickings; Barnsley produced linen goods of every description; Bradford made shoes; Cumberworth - woollen cloths- Halifax - merinos and lastings; Huddersfield broad and narrow cloths, shawls etc; Holmfirth - woollen cloths; the two Sheffield societies were producing razors, scissors, knives and files; Thurstonland - woollen cloths; Todmorden - calicoes, fustians and velveteens.[2] This catalogue does show how extensive manufacturing had become in Yorkshire, although the employment figures indicate that the majority of societies were only employing members part-time, with Huddersfield, Thurstonland and Todmorden the only societies employing members full-time.[3] By the fifth Congress only nine out of nineteen Yorkshire societies were manufacturing articles, Cumberworth and Holmfirth having obviously ceased production. Huddersfield was now employing ten full time members and could be seen to be putting the ideas of men like Hirst and Heaton into practice.

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1. Tables 2 and 3 give details of Yorkshire societies. Table 4 includes every society represented at the Huddersfield Congress of April 1832.

2. Hirst boasted at a Congress in 1832 that he was wearing a co-operative shirt, a co-operative coat and a co-operative waistcoat. Proceedings of Third Co-operative Congress, April 1832, p38.

3. In the case of Todmorden, it shows that 150 members were employed, this does seem too large to be true, this was most probably a printing or statistical error.

TABLE TWO LIVERPOOL CONGRESS STATISTICS 1st - 6th October 1832 (Only Yorkshire societies listed)

Name of Society	By Delegate or Letter	Secretary's Name and Address	When Formed	Number of Members	Amount of Funds	Any School Lectures or Discussions	Any Members Employed	Articles Manufactured	Any Library	Have you Discussed Labour Exchange	Societies in your Neighbourhood
ANGSLEY	James Rowley	David Abbott, Ardsley, Near Barnsley	Feb.1831	29	80.0.0	No	Several Partially	Linens, checks, diapers, Tickings, etc.	Yes	Yes	Seven
ARMITAGE BRIDGE	Thomas Hirst	William Clay Armitage Bridge	April 19,1830	-	-	No			Consid-erable	-	-
BARNSLEY 1st	James Rowley	George Brown Wilsons Piece Barnsley	June 1,1829	31	100.0.0	No	Several Partially	Linen Goods of every description	Yes	Yes Partially	
BRADFORD	Charles Simons	T. Carrodus, 474 Fawcetts Row, Bradford	Feb.1829	36	120.0.0	Sunday	One	Shoes	72 vols	Partially	
CUMBERWORTH	Thomas Hirst	W.Wood Jnr, Cumberworth Near Wakefield	Oct.1831	34	36.0.0	Yes	A few	Woollen Cloths	Yes	No	
HALIFAX 1st	Thomas Wilson & Jas Adkins	John Wilson 41 North Bridge St., Halifax	May 5,1829	55	242.0.0	No	Five Partially	Merinos & Lastings	50 vols	Yes	Sixteen
HUDDERSFIELD	Thomas Hirst & John Jessop	C. Wood & Co Co-op Store Westgate Huddersfield	April 20,1829	100	328.5.7½	No	12 Occasion-ally	Broad and Narrow cloths Shawls etc.	Small	Yes	Twelve
HOLMFIRTH	Thomas Hirst	J. Hoyle Co-op Store Underbank Huddersfield	March 1832	29	11.4.0	No	Several Occasion-ally	Woollen Cloths	Yes	No	

Source: Congress Report, 1832.

TABLE TWO LIVERPOOL CONGRESS STATISTICS 1st - 6th October 1832 (Only Yorkshire societies listed)

Name of Society	By Delegate or Letter	Secretary's Name and Address	When Formed	Number of Members	Amount of Funds	Any School Lectures or Discussions	Any Members Employed	Articles Manufactured	Any Library	Have you Discussed Labour Exchange	Societies in your Neighbourhood
LINDLEY	Thomas Hirst	Edward Shaw Postmaster Lindley	Feb 1832								& Sheepshead
SHEFFIELD 1st	J. Nicholson J.Singleton G. Platts	J. Singleton 28 West Bar Green Sheffield	Jan 1830	60	120.0.0	No	Several Partially	Razors,Scissors, Knives, Files etc.	Yes	Partially	one
SHEFFIELD 2nd	F. Wade J. Woodcock F. Hoyland	John Hasland 18 Hartshead Sheffield	April 1830	90	150.0.0	No	Several Partially	Razors,Scissors, Knives,Files, etc.	No	Yes	
STOCKSMOOR	Thomas Hirst	J. Armitage, Co-op Store Stocksmoor Nr.Huddersfield	April 1832	-	-	No	No	None	No	No	
SHEPLEY	Thomas Hirst	John Garlick, Shepley Nr.Huddersfield	May 1830	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
SHELLEY 1st	Thomas Hirst	William Nowell, Shelley Nr.Huddersfield	Feb 1832	15	-	-					
SHELLEY 2nd	Thomas Hirst	Joseph Berry, Shelley Nr.Huddersfield	April 1832	7	10.10.0	No	No	None	No	No	

Source: Congress Report, 1832.

TABLE TWO LIVERPOOL CONGRESS STATISTICS 1st - 6th October 1832 (Only Yorkshire societies listed)

Name of Society	By Delegate or Letter	Secretary's Name and Address	When Formed	Number of Members	Amount of Funds	Any School Lectures or Discussions	Any Members Employed	Articles Manufactured	Any Library	Have you Discussed Labour Exchange	Societies in your Neighbourhood
THURSTON LAND	Thomas Hirst & T.Fielding	J. Mellor & Co Thurstonland	April 1830	40	130.0.0	No	Three	Woollen Cloths	Small	No	
TODMORDEN	John Mitchell	John Mitchell Blind Lane Todmorden	1828	250	200.0.0	No	150	Calicoes,Fustians, Velveteens,etc.	No	No	Three

Source: Congress Report, 1832.

TABLE THREE HUDDERSFIELD CONGRESS STATISTICS 8th - 10th April 1833 (Only Yorkshire societies listed)

Name of Society	By Delegate or Letter	Secretary's Name and Address	When Formed	Number of Members	Amount of Funds	Any School	Any Members Employed	Articles Manufactured	Any Library	Have you Discussed Principles of Exchange	Societies in the Neighbourhood
ARDSLEY	Letter	David Abbott Ardsley Near Barnsley	Feb.1831	26	65.0.0	No	Yes	Linens, Checks, Tickings,etc.	No	No	-
ARMITAGE BRIDGE	Letter	William Clay Armitage Bridge	19th April 1830	25	103.9.0	One in Contemplation	No	None	35 vols	No	Three
BARNSLEY, WEST END	George Marshall	Wm.Grant Shambles Street	21st March 1832	83	175.0.0	No	Several	Linen Goods	No	No	Four
BARNSLEY	Letter	G. Brown Wilson's Piece	June 1829	30	73.0.0	No	Occasionally	Linen Goods	No	No	-
BRADFORD	George Marshall	C. Simons 475 Fawcett Row	Feb.1829	30	120.0.0	Yes	Occasionally	Heald, Yarns and Shoes	70 vols	No	None
CUMBERWORTH 1st	Rev C.B. Dunn and T.Hirst	Wm.Wood, Jnr Cumberworth	Oct. 1831	31	25.0.0	Yes	None	None	Yes	No	None
DENBY	Rev.C.B. Dunn and T.Hirst	Wm.Kilner Denby,Wakefield	Mar.1832	14	-	No	No	None	No	No	None
HALIFAX	J.Nicholson	D. Wilson 41 North Bridge Street	5th May 1829	60	216.0.0	No	Four	Merinos, Stuffs, Lustriners	50 vols	Yes	Nine
HUDDERSFIELD	Rev.C.B.Dunn and T.Hirst	C.Wood & Co Westgate.	20th April 1829	150	299.17.9½	No	Ten	Woollen Cloth Valencias etc.	Small	Yes	Fourteen
HOLMFIRTH	Rev.C.B.Dunn and T.Hirst	Holmfirth Nr.Huddersfield	March 1832	30	-	No	No	None	No	No	-

Source: Congress Report, 1833.

TABLE THREE: HUDDERSFIELD CONGRESS STATISTICS 8th - 10th April 1833 (Only Yorkshire societies listed)

Name of Society	By Delegate or Letter	Secretary's Name and Address	When Formed	Number of Members	Amount of Funds	Any School	Any Members Employed	Articles Manufactured	Any Library	Have you Discussed Principles of Exchange	Societies in the Neighbourhood
KEIGHLEY	Letter	Wm.Hanson 23 Sun Street	Nov.1829	40	246.11.6	No	No	None	No	Yes	-
LINDLEY	Rev.C.B.Dunn	Ed. Shaw Postmaster Lindley	Feb.1832	9	2.3.4	No	No	None	Small	No	-
NEW MILLS	Rev.C.B.Dunn and T.Hirst	Mr. Pearce New Mills Nr.Huddersfield	May 1832	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SHEFFIELD 1st	H.Beatson	J. Nicholson 28 West Bar	Jan.1830	63	110.13.7	No	Yes	Razors,Files Scissors,etc.	Small	No	Two
SHEFFIELD 2nd	R.Nash	F.Wade 18 Hartshead	April 1830	184	300.0.0	No	Yes	Cutlery of All Kinds	No	No	-
SHEPLEY	Rev.C.B.Dunn and T.Hirst	John Garlic Shepley	May 1830	15	40.0.0	No	No	No	No	No	-
SHELLEY	Rev.C.B.Dunn and T.Hirst	Jos.Spencer Shelley	Feb.1832	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
STOCKSMOOR	Rev.C.B.Dunn and T.Hirst	Josh Armitage Stocksmoor	April 1832	18	34.0.0	No	-	-	-	-	-
THURSTON LAND	Rev.C.B.Dunn and T.Hirst	J. Mellor & Co Thurstonland	5th April 1830	40	117.13.0	No	Yes	Woollen Cloth	L & Y Co-operator	No	No

Source: Congress Report, 1833.

TABLE FOUR HUDDERSFIELD CONGRESS STATISTICS 8th - 10th April 1833 (All Societies)

Name of Society	By Delegate or Letter	Secretary's Name and Address	When Formed	Number of Members	Amount of Funds	Any School	Any Members Employed	Articles Manufactured	Any Library	Have you Discussed Principles of Exchange	Societies in the Neighbourhood
ARDSLEY	Letter	David Abbott Ardsley Nr. Barnsley Yorkshire	Feb.1831	26	65.0.0	No	Yes	Linens,Checks, Tickings, etc.	No	No	
ARMITAGE BRIDGE	Letter	William Clay Armitage Bridge Nr.Huddersfield	19th April 1830	25	103.9.6	One in contemplation	No	None	3 vols	No	Three
BOLTON 1st	Letter	Samuel Mather Little Bolton Lancs	Jan.1832	66	26.5.10	Evening School	None	None	No	No	Eight
BOLTON 2nd	Letter	Robert Roscoe Bollings Houses Bolton	18 Feb.1832	32	15.12.5	Yes 100 Scholars	None	None	No	No	
BOLTON MANUF-TURING	G.Mandley and F.Smith	G.Hodgkinson Sweet Green Bolton	5 May 1830	29	170.0.0	No	All and Families	Marseilles Bed Quilts	No	No	
BARNSLEY WEST END	George Marshall	Wm. Gant Shambles St Barnsley Yorkshire	21 Mar.1832	83	175.0.0	No	Several	Linen Goods	No	No	Four
BARNSLEY	Letter	G. Brown Wilsons Piece Barnsley Yorkshire	June 1829	30	73.0.0	No	Occasionally	Linen Goods	No	No	

Source: Congress Report, 1833.

TABLE FOUR HUDDERSFIELD CONGRESS STATISTICS 8th - 10th April 1833 (All Societies)

Name of Society	By Delegate or Letter	Secretary's Name and Address	When Formed	Number of Members	Amount of Funds	Any School	Any Members Employed	Articles Manufactured	Any Library	Have you Discussed Principles of Exchange	Societies in the Neighbourhood
BRADFORD	George Marshall	C. Simons 475 Fawcett Row Bradford Yorkshire	Feb.1829	30	120.0.0	Yes	Occasionally	Heald, Yarn and Shoes	70 vols	No	None
BOOTHFOLD 2nd	Letter	J.Higgins Boothfold Rosendale Lancashire	Aug.1831	60	73.0.0	No	None	None	No	No	Two
BIRMINGHAM	Peter Bishop and Vincent Cook	Wm. Pare 105 New Street Birmingham	28 Nov.1828	30	Not known	No	None	None	170 vols	No	Four
BIRKACRE	W. Carson and Ed. Taylor	Ellis Piggott Printer's Arms Salford Lancashire		3000	4000.0.0	No	150	Silk and Calico Printers	No	No	None
BARNS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CUMBERWORTH 1st	Rev.C.B.Dunn and T.Hirst	Wm.Wood Jun. Cumberworth Nr.Wakefield	Oct.1831	34	25.0.0	Yes	None	None	Yes	No	None
DARLINGTON	Letter	J. Topham & Co. High Row Darlington Durham	3 June 1829	13	82.0.0	No	None	Commencing Linen Cloth	Yes	One	
DENBY	Rev.C. Dunn and T. Hirst	Wm.Kilner Denby, Wakefield Yorkshire	Mar.1832	14		No	None	No	No	No	None

Source: Congress Report, 1833.

TABLE FOUR HUDDERSFIELD CONGRESS STATISTICS 8th - 10th April 1833 (All Societies)

Name of Society	By Delegate or Letter	Secretary's Name and Address	When Formed	Number of Members	Amount of Funds	Any School	Any Members Employed	Articles Manufactured	Any Library	Have you Discussed Principles of Exchange	Societies in the Neighbourhood
FOLESHILL	Richard Holmes	R. Holmes Bell Green. Foleshill Nr.Coventry	Jan.1829	45	160.0.0	No	No	-	No	Yes	Two
GLASGOW	R.Harriston	A. Campbell 42 London Street Glasgow	-	-	Not known	-	-	-	Small	Yes	Twelve
HATHORNE	Letter	J. Loseby Hathorne Leicestershire	9 Aug.1829	70	100.0.0	No	Yes	Stockings, etc.	No	No	Four
HALIFAX	J.Nicholson	D.Wilson 41 North Bridge St.Halifax	5th May 1829	60	216.0.0	No	Four	Merinos, Stuffs Lustrings,etc.	50 vols.	Yes	Nine
HOLYWELL	Letter	C.Hughes Whitford St. Holywell Denbighshire	April 1830	84	46.0.0	No	No	None	No	No	One
HUDDERSFIELD 1st	Rev.C.B.Dunn and T.Hirst	C.Wood & Co. Westgate Huddersfield	20th April 1829	150	299.17.9½	No	Ten	Woollen Cloth, Valencias, etc.	Small	Yes	Fourteen
HOLMFIRTH	Rev.C.B.Dunn and T.Hirst	Holmfirth,Nr. Huddersfield	March 1832	30		No	No	None	No	No	
HULME	G.Mandley and J.Smith	Josh Caldwell 32 Chester Road Manchester	July 1831	20	11.0.0	Sunday School	No	None	150 vols.	No	Three

Source: Congress Report, 1833.

TABLE FOUR HUDDERSFIELD CONGRESS STATISTICS 8th - 10th April 1833 (All Societies)

Name of Society	By Delegate or Letter	Secretary's Name and Address	When Formed	Number of Members	Amount of Funds	Any School	Any Members Employed	Articles Manufactured	Any Library	Have you Discussed Principles of Exchange	Societies in the Neighbourhood
KEIGHLEY	Letter	Wm. Hanson 23 Sun Street Keighley Yorks	Nov.1829	40	246.11.6	No	No	None	No	Yes	-
KENDAL	George Gaskell	Rd.Breaks Strannon Gate Kendal	July 1829	135	453.0.0	No	Nine	Shoes, Linen Goods etc.	No	No	Four
LONDON 1st	W. Lovett and J. Tucker	J.Edwards 19 Greville St. Hatton Garden	Nov.1827	36	209.10.9	No	None	None	200 vols	Yes	Eight
LONDON 1st Manufact. Association	George Skene	C. Jennerson 3 Field Terrace Battle Bridge	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LONDON Central Association	G. Petrie W.Benbow and D.Watkins	J. Dunman 8 Theobalds Road	Nov.1831	150	200.0.0	No	No	None	No	Yes	-
LONDON Kingsland	R. Wigg	R. Wigg 5 Derby Road Kingsland	Feb.1832	41	1.8.0	No	None	None	No	Yes	-
LONDON Westminster	J.D. Styles and J. Pope	W. Rawlinson 37 Marsham Street Westminster	May 1829	60	150.0.0	No	Yes	Tin Ware Brushes etc.	100 vols	No	-

Source: Congress Report, 1833.

TABLE FOUR HUDDERSFIELD CONGRESS STATISTICS 8th - 10th April 1833 (All Societies)

Name of Society	By Delegate or Letter	Secretary's Name and Address	When Formed	Number of Members	Amount of Funds	Any School	Any Members Employed	Articles Manufactured	Any Library	Have you Discussed Principles of Exchange	Societies in the Neighbourhood
LONDON 1st Western Union	B. Warden and Jas Flather	T. Whittaker 59 Poland Street Oxford Street	July 1830	140	250.0.0	No	All Occasionally	Sundries	50 vols	Yes, have opened	-
LONDON Metropolitan	B. Cousins and J. Elbourn	J. King 23 Duke's Street Lincoln's Inn Fields	Nov.1829	43	154.0.0	No	Occasionally	Shoes and Clothing	Small	-	-
LONDON 1st Tailors	J. Fowler	R. Campion 59 Poland Street Oxford Street	July 1831	209	118.11.0	No	Yes	Clothes	40 vols	Yes	-
LONDON Barnsbury Park	T. Wilkes and J & E Simpson	E. Simpson & Co. York Place Islington	10 Oct.1831	12	50.0.0	Yes	All	Shoes, Clothes and in Agriculture	70 vols	Yes	-
LEICESTER 3rd	Letter	J. Buckley Church Gate	Nov.1829	105	233.0.0	No	Twelve	Worsted Stockings	No	No	-
LINDLEY	C.B. Dunn and T. Hirst	Ed.Shaw Postmaster Lindley Nr.Huddersfield	Feb.1832	9	2.3.4	No	No	None	Small	No	-
LIVERPOOL 1st	John Finch	John Finch 2 Greenland St. Liverpool	Jan.1830	32	50.0.0	No	One	Shoes	No	No	One

Source: Congress Report, 1833.

TABLE FOUR HUDDERSFIELD CONGRESS STATISTICS 8th - 10th April 1833 (All Societies)

Name of Society	By Delegate or Letter	Secretary's Name and Address	When Formed	Number of Members	Amount of Funds	Any School	Any Members Employed	Articles Manufactured	Any Library	Have you Discussed Principles of Exchange	Societies in the Neighbourhood
LOUGHBOROUGH	J.Skevington	J.Skevington Fishpool-head Loughborough	Jan.1829	60	400.0.0	No	Several	Hosiery and Lace	No	No	Five
MANCHESTER Economical	G. Mandley and J. Smith	J.G.Kirkman 7 Rogers' Row Deansgate Manchester	Aug. 1830	20	53.0.0	No	Yes	Ginghams	Small	No	Three
MANCHESTER Ovenian	G. Mandley and J. Smith	J. Woolstencroft 5 Blakeley Street Manchester	14 June 1830	40	68.0.0	No	Yes	Fustians Cords and Beverteens	150 vols	Yes	-
MANCHESTER AND SALFORD Ass.for the dissemination of Co-operative knowledge	W.Caldwell W. Jackson and T.Lowe	G. Mandley 9 Islington Grove Salford Manchester	April 1831	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MANSFIELD 1st	Letter	J. Lister Mansfield Nottinghamshire	30 Aug.1830	18	100.0.0	No	No	None	Small	No	Four
NEWARK 1st	J. Kingdom	J. Kingdom Infant School Lover's Lane Newark	Dec.1831	98	60.0.0	98 Children	Yes	Frocks, Linens Brushes Boots Shoes	4 vols	No	-

Source: Congress Report, 1833.

TABLE FOUR HUDDERSFIELD CONGRESS STATISTICS 6th - 10th April 1833 (All Societies)

Name of Society	By Delegate or Letter	Secretary's Name and Address	When Formed	Number of Members	Amount of Funds	Any School	Any Members Employed	Articles Manufactured	Any Library	Have you Discussed Principles of Exchange	Societies in the Neighbourhood
NORWICH 1st	Zechariah Dent	C. Coe & Co St. Martin's-at-Oak Norwich	Sept.1827	33	270.0.0	No	Yes	Bombazines Crepes etc.	No	No	Five
NEWCHURCH 1st	Letter	Rd.Holt Newchurch Rossendale Lancashire	Dec.1829	40	328.0.0	No	Yes	Baizes Backings and Blankets	No	Yes	Four
NEW MILL	Rev.C.B.Dunn and T. Hirst	Mr. Pearce New Mills Nr.Huddersfield	May 1832	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
OUTWOOD and KEARSLEY	G. Mandley and J.Smith	J. Howarth Outwood and Kearsley Near Bolton Lancs	Dec.1831	24	9.0.0	No	No	None	No	No	Three
OLDBURY	Wm. Pare	D.F. Davies Brade's Steel Works Oldbury Nr.Birmingham	20 Feb.1832	50	20.0.0	No	No	None	No	No	Three
PRESTOLEE NEW MILLS	G. Mandley and J. Smith	J. Eattock 84 Prestolee Near Bolton Lancashire	Feb. 1832	46	12.11.1	No	No	None	No	No	Three

Source: Congress Report, 1833.

TABLE FOUR HUDDERSFIELD CONGRESS STATISTICS 8th - 10th April 1833 (All Societies)

Name of Society	By Delegate or Letter	Secretary's Name and Address	When Formed	Number of Members	Amount of Funds	Any School	Any Members Employed	Articles Manufactured	Any Library	Have you Discussed Principles of Exchange	Societies in the Neighbourhood
ROCHDALE FRIENDLY	Wm. Harrison	T. Ladyman 70 Cheetham Rochdale Lancashire	Oct.1830	52	108.0.0	No	Ten Families	Flannel	32 vols	No	Two
RALAHINE COMMUNITY	Wm.Maloney	E.T. Craig Ralahine Community Newton-on-Fergus County Clare Ireland		65	-	No	-	-	-	-	Four
RUNCORN 1st	G. Mandley and J. Smith	J.Roberts & Co. Church Lane Runcorn Cheshire	-	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
RATCLIFFE and PILKINGTON	G. Mandley and J. Smith	J. Bowker & Co, Ratcliffe Bridge Nr. Manchester	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SHEFFIELD 1st	H. Beatson	J. Nicholson 28 West Bar Sheffield Yorkshire	July 1830	63	110.13.7	No	Yes	Razors Scissors Files etc.	Small	No	Two
SHEFFIELD 2nd	R. Nash	F. Wade 18 Hartshead Sheffield Yorkshire	April 1830	181	300.0.0	No	Yes	Cutlery of all kinds	No	No	-

Source: Congress Report, 1833.

TABLE FOUR HUDDERSFIELD CONGRESS STATISTICS 8th - 10th April 1833 (All Societies)

Name of Society	By Delegate or letter	Secretary's Name and Address	When Formed	Number of Members	Amount of Funds	Any School	Any Members Employed	Articles Manufactured	Any Library	Have you Discussed Principles of Exchange	Societies in the Neighbourhood
SALFORD 1st	W. Jackson J. Smith G. Mandley	W. Jackson 15 Oldfield Road Salford Lancashire	Oct.1829	50	110.0.0	200 Children	No	None	50 vols	No	Four
STOCKPORT	G. Mandley and J.Smith	G. Ardern 4 Higher Hillgate Stockport Cheshire	June 1829	60	278.16.6	No	Yes	Beaver and Bonnets	No	No	Three
SHEPLEY	Rev.C.B. Dunn and T. Hirst	John Garlic Shepley Nr.Huddersfield	May 1830	15	40.0.0	No	No	No	No	No	-
SHELLEY	Rev.C.B. Dunn and T. Hirst	Josh Spencer Shelley Nr.Huddersfield	Feb.1832	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
STOCKSMOOR	Rev. C.B. Dunn and T. Hirst	Josh Armitage Stocksmoor Nr.Huddersfield	April 1832	18	34.0.0	No	-	-	-	-	-
THURSTON LAND	Rev.C.B. Dunn and T. Hirst	J. Mellor & Co. Thurstanland Nr.Huddersfield	5 April 1830	40	117.13.0	No	Yes	Woollen Cloth	L & Y Co-operator	No	No
WHITEHAVEN	Letter	J. Gibbons Carter Lane Whitehaven	June 1830	57	106.0.0	No	No	None	No	No	None

Source: Congress Report, 1833.

TABLE FOUR HUDDERSFIELD CONGRESS STATISTICS 8th - 10th April 1833 (All Societies)

Name of Society	By Delegate or Letter	Secretary's Name and Address	When Formed	Number of Members	Amount of Funds	Any School	Any Members Employed	Articles Manufactured	Any Library	Have you Discussed Principles of Exchange	Societies in the Neighbourhood
WALLINGFORD	J. Willis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
WARRINGTON	Rev.J. Marriott	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
WOOLTON	John Heaton	John Lowrie Woolton Lancashire	1829	10	80.0.0	No	No	None	No	-	-

Source: Congress Report, 1833.

Tables Three and Four also show that there was considerable interest in Yorkshire in labour exchanges, and the influence of Owen is quite obvious. Owen was very keen to promote labour exchanges and organised a system of National Equitable Labour Exchanges - they were termed "Equitable" because Owen intended them to effect exchanges at "true equivalents". He advanced a scheme in which the goods were to exchange in the only equitable manner in which men could mutually dispose of their property with each other, viz. its value in labour for equal value in labour without the intervention of money. Labour notes were given and each depositor would be able to get back from the exchange goods which had taken as much labour to make as those which he deposited. Labour would in fact be exchanged for labour, and none would be able to make profit out of others.

A gentleman by the name of Whittaker wrote about his co-operative tour through the north of England in the pages of the Owenite journal The Crisis.[1] The purpose of this tour was to give the people of the North some idea of the benefit they would derive (being working men) from the exchange of labour upon the principles laid down in The Crisis. Whittaker visited Halifax and societies in the neighbourhood and found them to be flourishing in regards to the accumulation of capital.[2] He addressed a meeting of the societies in which he advocated the benefits to be derived from labour exchanges. "They seem much pleased with what I said, but thought they could not open one, for the same reason as stated at Manchester, viz. on account of similarity of their trades".[3] But Whittaker assured the readers of The Crisis that if the London exchange would take lastings, merinos, stuffs, in exchange for treacle, or tea, it would be the saving of them and their families.[4] This was a central problem of exchanges; they never satisfactorily solved the

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1. The Crisis, Vol.1, No.29, Saturday, September 22nd 1832, p 115.
2. Huddersfield did send members to Sheffield to obtain a labour note sample but nothing definite seems to have come out of this visit.
3. The Crisis, Vol.1, No.29, Saturday, September 22nd 1832, p 115.
4. Patterns of which and prices Whittaker had obtained and would be happy to show to the Labour Exchange Committee.

problem of supplying food stuffs, which most of the depositors wanted in return for their goods, and whilst meeting in some degree the needs of handicraft, small producers did not meet the needs of the factory workers.

Whittaker was a keen observer[1] and noted that the societies in the Halifax area had formed themselves into a "manufacturing association" and had an agent and stand in the local cloth mart.[2] It was evident to Whittaker, that their capital had been raised from the profit of their dealings at the provisions store. The unified state of these societies must have been largely due to the efforts of Thomas Wilson, President of the Halifax society, who did a great deal of work in bringing the local societies into contact with each other. The Manufacturing Association[3] was formed by Halifax, Holdsworth and Shibden societies and had made several "warps into pieces" and received orders for goods from Liverpool, Manchester, Barnsley and Keighley. The association's goods were, according to Wilson, exchangeable for linens, blue linens, cotton prints,hardings, check, flannels and fustians.[4] It was hoped that by using these articles of exchange, the money given for them at local stores would return into the funds of the association. A further indication of the efforts being made to unify the scattered societies was the formation of a district sub-council that comprised members from all the societies in the neighbourhood of Halifax, Bradford and Huddersfield.[5] The aim of this sub-council was to further the progress of Co-operation in the districts, by assisting each other, and establishing new societies. It is clear that the Yorkshire Movement

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1. He visited different local manufactories (private sector), went into wool combers' dungeons seeing the terrible conditions these people worked under.
2. The Crisis, Vol.1, No.29, Saturday,September 22nd 1832, p 116.
3. Full title was "The Halifax District Co-operative Manufacturing Association".
4. Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, August, 1832, p 8.
5. Each society having twenty members or under to send one delegate to council meeting, and so on, one for each twenty members.

was not only pioneering co-operative production, the exchange of goods, but was very conscious of the need to work together. "Union is strength". However, this was obviously not the case in other parts of the county, for when Whittaker left Halifax he travelled on to Leeds, but found that the Leeds society had entirely broken up.[1] It remains a mystery why the largest city in Yorkshire was such a desert of co-operative activity, especially when Harrison describes Leeds in the 1830's and 1840's as being second only to Manchester as a centre of radical working class movements in the north.[2] This could be due simply to the fact that Co-operation was regarded as not being radical enough.[3] On visiting Hull, Whittaker distributed The Crisis but was not able to detect any co-operative activity in that town. Thus even though the Movement could not claim to be active throughout the county, there were many signs that indicated that the Movement had established a firm, though not strong, organisation and structure.

Yorkshire societies show again that they were not parochial in their approach to the wider Movement by playing a leading part in supporting the North West of England Co-operative Company. This company was the first attempt to organise a wholesale society. The need for such an organisation arose because the artisans whom the societies set to work soon found they were capable of turning out more goods than their fellow members could afford to buy and had to seek markets in other societies if they were to be kept constantly employed. A system of exchanging surplus products was needed and the Manchester Congress of 1831 decided to set up "various wholesale trading companies", but in reality only one society in fact was established in December 1831 at Liverpool. Mr. John Heaton of Huddersfield was appointed agent to the company at the second Congress, and Thomas Hirst was one of the

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1. As described in King's Co-operator, No.10, February 1st,1829 pp 37-40.

2. Thoresby Society Monographs III 1952, No.100 "James Hole and Social Reform in Leeds" by J.F.C. Harrison, p 2.

3. Many radicals objected to the way in which the Movement was prepared to work within the system, Chartists believing in political reform for changing society.

five acting trustees appointed.[1]

It was hoped that the wholesale company would do £500 a week in trade, however the figure was nearer £500 a month. Due mainly to lack of support, the concern was losing money almost from the start and by 1833 the Huddersfield society was recorded as paying 5/- per member towards the losses.[2] At the Halifax Congress, April 1835, it was shown that in the previous year only Halifax and Huddersfield had traded with the company and it was resolved that it should be wound up. This was a classical case in which united actions could have directly benefited all societies, yet only a couple of Yorkshire societies seem to have responded to the call. Yorkshire societies, such as Huddersfield and Halifax, seemed in many ways to have had a much fuller understanding of what Co-operation stood for, and what could be achieved by united action.

Not everybody writing to the Editor of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator appeared to be satisfied with the state of Co-operation. One unsigned writer believed that Co-operation was a system which had the tendency to make those who engaged in it become capitalists, and by their capital become tradesmen or landowners or both.[3] According to this writer many societies had commenced trading, and had become "possessed of small capitals", but then three enemies entered the picture, viz. jealousy, ignorance and Competition, and so within a short space of time any true principles of social equality would founder on "the rocks of competition". There seems to be very good ground for believing that in a number of societies the original aspirations of the founding members had been diverted once it was realised that they had created a "nest egg" that was too bountiful to be shared amongst their fellow men. We have already seen that Kirkheaton, had introduced a scheme that benefited mainly the shareholders, and it took a long time before true principles could be restored and the benefits of

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1. Proceedings of Second Co-operative Congress, Birmingham, 1832, p 22.
2. Co-operative News, Saturday, January 16th,1892, p 53.
3. Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, No.10, January 7th 1832, p 5.

Co-operation shared amongst all the members. But Kirkheaton was not the only society that practiced this form of Co-operation.

Ripponden Co-operative Society was one of the societies established in the early 1830's, and Thomas Hirst in fact, was the main speaker at the first gathering of interested parties, held in the Queen Hotel, Ripponden, on November 10th, 1832.[1] The preamble to the rules of the society started with the traditional quotation from the Bible.[2] "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."[3] These early pioneers painted a very bleak picture of the lot of the ordinary worker. "From the astonishing changes which the course of a series of years have produced to the labouring classes of the United Kingdom at large, from competition and the increase of machinery which supersedes hand labour, combined with various other causes, over which, as yet, the labouring classes have no control". Co-operation was considered to be the best practical plan to ameliorate their condition, but in reality the grand words of the promoters were in fact only to apply to a select minority of the inhabitants of Ripponden. No attempt was made at production; the society merely purchased the every-day requirements of a village general store.[4] Thirty one members were set down on the 13th September 1834 as being foundation members, with a value of £3.6.0. per member, 14 others being credited with varying sums from 14/6 to £2. From a very early stage profits made were added to the shareholdings of members, this sum gradually increased year by year.[5] By June 1836, there were still only 45 members and their shares were valued at £4.8.0 each, the

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1. A collection was made to defray his expenses and amounted to a sum of 7/4. Priestly, op.cit., p 19.
2. Registered in London on July 16th 1839.
3. St. Pauls 1st Epistle to the Thessalonians, Chapter V, verse 21.
4. Cotton warps were also purchased and weft at 10½d per lb for weaving members.
5. Profits added each year were as follows

1833-4	£1.13.0	Total Profits £99.6.0
1835	£1. 2.0	
1836	£1.12.6	
1837	£1.16.0	
1838	£3. 8.0	Total Profits £168.3.4
1839	£2. 2.6	Total Profits £78.8.6
1840	£3.10.6	
1841	£1. 9.0	
1842	£1. 8.0	Total Profits £126.2.0
1850		Total Profits £156.18.6

Source: J.H.Priestley, The History of the Ripponden Co-operative Society Ltd. (Halifax, 1932) p 149.

paid up subscription amounting to £2. It is evident that membership was restricted, although non-members could purchase goods at the store. It is understandable, from a materialistic point of view, why the membership, who could so easily see the great benefits of their endeavours, did not wish to extend these benefits to others. By contrast, when the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers was established less than a decade later one of their central principles was open membership. They recognised that without such a safeguard, it would always be possible for the members of a successful store to convert it in to a source of private profit for themselves by selling at a profit to non-members or by admitting new members only with inferior rights.

In reality the Ripponden co-operative was narrow and exclusive in aims, and as a proportion of their trade was done with the outside public and their capital was increased by the profits therefrom, they soon became almost as exclusive and proprietary as private traders. A true social principle had in fact degenerated into a capitalist undertaking: their aims were far removed from the ideas of starting a community and exchanging labour for labour. The rules laid down by the Rev.Dunn at the third Congress in London clearly show that Ripponden was developing in a fashion contrary to the wishes of Congress. The first rule regarding community was recognised by the first rule book of the society, yet no attempt was made to put this plan into operation. Capital was raised by subscriptions and store keeping but this was to be the accumulated capital of individuals not the capital of a united body. This disregard for the "model" rules was also repeated in the fields of mutual employment of members and schools for the education of children. Indeed, the order book shows that the "First Ripponden Co-operative Society" was acting only as a retail outlet, and the nearest the society got to production was selling warps and weft to their members engaged in trade on their own account.[1] Rule five related to

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1. In early days of society, some members supplied store with their own produce, i.e. Thomas Gaukrodger - shoes; Thomas Shaw - balls of shoe blacking; James Crabtree and Uriah Ratcliffe - new butter in small quantities weekly at 11d per lb. Priestly, op.cit., p 25.

the indivisibility of capital in order to achieve their ultimate aim of "community on land". But, as already stated, the capital of the society was recognised as being in fact the individual capital of the members, therefore this rule was also by-passed. The sixth rule concerning credit was, like most co-operative societies in this period not followed.[1] In 1838 it was recorded that members' debts were £62.3.6.[2] The final rule stating that members could not be members of more than one society obviously did not apply to Ripponden: indeed the desire to join a society was so strong that as soon as a society had been established in Sowerby Bridge, some of those not able to join the Ripponden society, joined and got them to open a store in Ripponden.[3] Thus, Ripponden seems to have violated all the rules that were accepted by the London Congress. While it is clear that Yorkshire co-operators were playing a very important part in establishing the institutional framework in which societies could develop, it would appear that local interests were ultimately the strongest force operating within societies.

LADY BYRON'S LETTERS

A great deal of information relating to the development of the early Co-operative Movement in Yorkshire is contained in the letters that passed between Thomas Hirst and Lady Byron.[4] Lady Byron had become interested in co-operatives from 1826, and is known to have financed a number of societies in the late 1820's and early 1830's as well as giving support to the Artisans Bazaar at the Liverpool Congress.[5]

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1. Also true for post-Rochdale period.
2. No sales figures are given for this year, but it is known that about £2000 was spent on purchases during 1833, by June 1860 sales figures are available and indicate £3788. Priestly, op.cit. pp 25 & 15
3. Which they did on May 5th, 1861. Priestly, op.cit., p 91.
4. Published in a series of articles written by Holyoake in Co-operative News, January 1892.
5. The year that Dr. King found a house for her in Brighton.

Her first letter to Hirst, who at this time was residing in Granby Street, Huddersfield, came from her Fordbrook, Acton, home on March 26th, 1832. It is apparent that Hirst must have started the exchange of letters, but Lady Byron appeared eager to state her opinions concerning co-operation. She indicated that "the cause of the poor is indeed my first interest in life, and Co-operation has afforded me the hope of doing some good with the means placed in my hands".[1] Lady Byron does not seem to have been discouraged by the fact that the help she had furnished to some of the earliest societies had not produced beneficial results. She put this failure down to the inexperience and miscalculations that could have been prevented by the diffusion of more practical knowledge. Her ladyship shared Hirst's view that Co-operation should stand aloof from sects and parties, "both church and state", and obviously would have pleased Hirst when she stated that "circumstances have comparatively but little efficacy in the formation of character".[2] In this first letter Lady Byron would appear to have been replying to a series of observations made by the Yorkshireman. Hirst must also have enclosed a copy of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator for Lady Byron stated that she was favourably impressed by its contents, agreeing to defray the expense of a certain number of copies until its circulation had increased. Her interest in the spreading of useful knowledge amongst working people is shown by her sending a dozen copies of Harriet Martineau's Illustrations of Political Economy (1834), a book that she thought the best work yet written on the subject. In concluding this letter she demonstrates again the link between Dr. William King and the Yorkshire Movement and urges Hirst to make sure that when republishing passages from the "Brighton Co-operator" all references to the Brighton society should be omitted, as it had failed owing to the violation of some of "fundamental principles of co-operation".[3]

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1. Co-operative News, Saturday, January 9th, 1892, p 29.
2. She also thought the sanction of religion necessary to its vitality; this point must also have pleased Hirst and the Rev. Dunn for it summed up their philosophy of Co-operation. Co-operative News, Saturday, January 9th, 1892, p 29.
3. It appears that in 1832 a few of its members took their capital out of the society, and purchased a boat and set up as share-fishermen.

Holyoake interpreted this first letter as showing Lady Byron's "noble sympathy with the poor and her belief that co-operation was the most promising means of their elevation".[1] But "noble sympathy" apart, Lady Byron strikes one as a very practical person who had a deep understanding of the problems facing Co-operation. Indeed, in her postscript, political expediency is adopted in order to cover up what she realised was still the very tenuous grip Co-operation had within the ranks of the working classes.

An indication that the Yorkshire Movement was attracting some influential supporters is revealed in this first letter, by the mention of Harriet Martineau, the leading exponent of current economic issues and policy.[2] Miss Martineau's obvious conversion to the cause of Co-operation is covered in the second issue of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator.[3] She informs the secretary of the Association that she had been awakened from a state of aristocratic prejudice, to a clear conviction of the equality of human rights, and of the paramount duty of society, to provide for the support, comfort, and enlightenment of every member born into it. Martineau from now on would, in her books, advance her new beliefs in the hope of pressing upon the rich a conviction of their obligations, and of inducing the poor to urge their claims with moderation and forbearance. She agreed to help the cause of Co-operation through the press, with the proviso that societies must help her by assisting in the circulation of her volumes.

This message advanced by Miss Martineau is identical in intention to that voiced by Lady Byron - we will help you by pressing upon the

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1. Co-operative News, Saturday, January 9th 1892, p 29.
2. Miss Eliz Wright Macauley writing from her home - 52 Clarendon Square, London, found Mr. Hirst a very agreeable fellow. Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, Issue 3, May 1832, pp 14-16.
3. This letter was sent to the editor by the secretary of the "Manchester and Salford Association for the spreading of Co-operative Knowledge" who had written to Miss Martineau expressing their admiration of her undertakings and recommending to her perusal Thompson's Distribution of Wealth and Morgan's Revolt of the Bees. Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, No.2, April 1832, p 15.

rich their obligations as long as the poor pursue their claims with moderation and forbearance. Hirst and the moderate Yorkshire leadership were obviously men that could be trusted, and therefore help would be provided if required. The purpose of Hirst's correspondence with Lady Byron was not merely social in content, but in fact must have contained definite requests to secure loans for the Huddersfield society. Lady Byron replying to this request confides to Hirst that she could obtain the loan and was not surprised that it was needed.[1] She rejects in this letter the views expressed by King in the Co-operator that all loans were dangerous, and that societies should not attempt to manage more capital than they make.[2] Her opinion was that it was impossible to engage in mercantile concerns without "money in hand".

Holyoake in presenting this correspondence is also able to give a reasonable description of the events leading up to the letters being sent to Lady Byron, and the reasons why the Huddersfield society needed to raise more capital.[3] It is clear that by the time of the first anniversary of the society in 1831, there was a shortage of funds. The young concern needed funds for its extension beyond those advanced by the share subscriptions of its members and it was therefore resolved that a loan be contracted from Lady Harwood or Lady Byron. The society's shop seemed to be catering for the basic needs of members; the stock contained sacks of flour and oatmeal, starch, sugar, currants, raisins, soda, tobacco, malt and hops.[4] In 1832 the society sent a recommendation to Congress that all co-operators should contribute at the rate of 4s.

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1. Sent from Margate October 13th, 1832.
2. In a postscript to this letter she reveals that she had not yet finalised arrangements for the loan but was directing Messrs. Drummond and Company, of Charing Cross, to answer any of his drafts for any sums to the amount of one hundred pounds, which Lady Byron could repay herself out of the loan when effected.
3. Co-operative News, Saturday, January 16th, 1892, p 53.
4. One of the early salesmen for the society was David Green who became very active in later years in the Leeds society. Green was employed to take a card of patterns into the country "where he may think likely to make sales." Co-operative News, Saturday, January 16th, 1892, p 53.

per member to commence manufacturing woollen cloth, cotton or flannel on a large scale.[1] It was hoped that every society might therefore have the produce at prime costs. But like the case of the wholesale society, the money was simply not available for such visionary schemes. Hirst and his fellow co-operators in Huddersfield realised that for any of their hopes to be realised outside money was needed, and it was for this reason that they approached Lady Byron.

The extent to which her ladyship was prepared to go in order to raise loans for a cause close to her heart is shown in a further letter dated 24th October 1832, in which she introduces another lady who was prepared to invest money into Yorkshire co-operative societies. Miss Elizabeth Chaloner of Tunbridge Wells was prepared to advance a £500 loan[2] to the Northern Co-operative Company[3] for three years at 4% interest. Lady Byron informed Hirst that Miss Chaloner was a friend of his cause, though disapproving entirely of the principles held by Robert Owen. This lady from Tunbridge Wells was very concerned that on no account was anybody to divulge her name, "as most unpleasant consequences would result to her from its being made public".[4] Lady Byron stated that the income of this benefactor was very small and therefore could not reduce the interest below 4%, indeed she had apparently declined more advantageous modes of investment in favour of the co-operative cause.

Lady Byron obviously must have had a great deal of respect for Hirst. This confidence in his integrity was clearly shown in the loan that she had arranged from a complete stranger. However, her trust in Hirst seems to have suffered a severe setback in February 1833.

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1. Proceedings of Third Co-operative Congress, London, p 122.
2. Money ready at Messrs. Drummonds, bankers, Charing Cross.
3. No evidence seems to be available concerning this venture, it could have in fact even been the wholesale society, i.e. the North West of England Co-operative Company.
4. Co-operative News, Saturday, January 16th, 1892, p 54.

She was angry and concerned that a report had reached her from "a person entitled to credit" that an individual in Yorkshire was industriously spreading, as a fact, that he was in communication with Lady Byron, and had actually received large sums from her for the purpose of forwarding "secret unions of a very dangerous political tendency". Her anger takes on a very superior tone when she declares: "You as well as everyone of your class with whom I have been in any way concerned, must be fully aware from my repeated declarations that I never would concur in or countenance any scheme of a political nature". Like Miss Chaloner, her ladyship did not wish her name to be used without her permission.[1] In concluding this stern letter she moderated her tone slightly by indicating that her knowledge of Hirst's character predisposed her to believe that the error was a result of his anxiety to promote the good of the distressed workmen by means, that he thought she would approve.

This was a very serious letter and the report mentioned might well discourage a lady so desirous of anonymity as Lady Byron from ever again associating herself with such an organisation. Hirst must have been very concerned how best to answer these serious charges, this coming also at a time when his health seemed to be causing some concern to his family. He explained in his reply that his delay in replying to her letter was because he was "extremely ill".[2] No doubt hoping to evoke Christian sympathy, he described his illness in detail and then uses the most flattering religious adjectives to describe her ladyship. Hirst clarified his position, stating that Co-operation had nothing to do with politics or secret unions of a political nature, and that no single member of the Huddersfield society was connected with a political union.[3] He did not directly admit the charges made against him, only

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1. She did allow it to be mentioned that she had subscribed £5 to the Artisans Bazaar at Liverpool - this being the sale of goods produced by societies - and she had only agreed to this when it was decided to adopt that appelation in preference to "Co-operative Mart". Co-operative News, Saturday, January 16th, 1892, p 54.

2. Co-operative News, Saturday, January 23rd, 1892, p 77. No date given on this letter.

3. It is known that in 1832 the Huddersfield society committee - £3 was ordered to defray election expenses incurred by Captain Wood's Committee - this would be for first Parliamentary election in Huddersfield. Co-operative News, Saturday, January 16th, 1892, p 54.

requesting that her Ladyship could, with propriety, inform him through what channel the report had come.

It is however quite clear that Hirst had, on more than one occasion, let slip, most probably deliberately, that Co-operation had a very influential patron. Indeed at the Sheffield Co-operative Bazaar, and in fact at the Congress Lady Byron had previously alluded to, he had stated that the cause of Co-operation had met with support from several members of the higher classes, amongst whom he mentioned the Right Hon. Lady Byron and stated that "she should never be ashamed of supporting a cause so noble, so godlike, so peculiarly calculated to emancipate the working classes and save the country."[1] Hirst had been more discreet when addressing a meeting in Leicester, merely referring to a "noble lady" who "due to her retirement of disposition" shuns the mention of her name.[2]

Lady Byron did not seem to hold a grudge, she most probably accepted that it was in many ways inevitable that her name, being so famous, would be used to give added respectability to the co-operative cause. By March 1833 she was again writing to Hirst in the friendly and warm fashion that was so characteristic of her earlier exchanges.[3] It would appear that she was now more concerned with Hirst's health than any other issue, and offered to pay Dr. King's expenses to visit him, "both as a friend and a physician". However King expressed the opinion that he would have liked to visit Hirst but was very uncertain whether he could leave Brighton without injury to his professional objects.[4] It seems that King was very reluctant to get involved again in the co-operative field having experienced some harsh attacks from people who linked him with the views of Robert Owen.[5] However he did

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1. Proceedings of Fourth Co-operative Congress, Liverpool, 1832, p 2.
2. The Crisis, Vol.1, No.14, June 23rd, 1832, p 55.
3. Co-operative News, Saturday, January 23rd, 1892, p 77. Letter dated March 29th, 1832.
4. King was very busy in the medical profession. By 1842 he was appointed consulting physician to the Royal Sussex Hospital and carried on in this post until retirement in 1861.
5. Dr. King was openly accused of infidelity and sedition. The Rev. W.L. Pope of Tunbridge Wells, asserted that his motives were "wicked" and that his principles were horrid and himself an infidel. T.W. Mercer (ed.) Dr. William King and the Co-operator 1828-30, (Manchester, 1922) p xxv.

correspond with Hirst a man who he felt could be trusted to follow that moderate path that he had himself championed in the 1820's.[1]

By August 12th 1834 the Huddersfield committee were extending their operations further and recommended to their members the purchase of two rooms and a jenny, and to employ others as soon as circumstances would permit.[2] The society was able, due to its prosperity, to pay £102.0.6 towards Lady Byron's account by 1836.[3] However, the man who made this success possible, Thomas Hirst, had passed away, and was not able to see the full fruits of his labours.[4] Lady Byron did not end her association with the family, and agreed to pay the school fees for Hirst's two children, who attended Mr. Craig's Ealing Grove school for three years.

Within these few letters it is evident that Hirst, the best known of the Yorkshire co-operators, had some very influential friends. Not only was Lady Byron impressed by his qualities, but Dr. William King, "the first prophet" of modern Co-operation was acquainted with a man who shared his own Christian and moral views concerning co-operation. In many respects the views expressed indicate that the paternalistic instincts of a section of the ruling classes had not completely disappeared, even though the desire to remain anonymous was very strong owing to the fear of being associated with a potentially subversive

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1. King did write to the editor of the Co-operator in 1864 to give his opinion of the state of the Movement that he helped to create. See chapter 7, p 257 of this thesis for content of letter.

2. Brief summary of the progress in terms of profit

1835	Oct 1	Total profits	£1450.13.6
1836	Mar 24	" "	£1867. 1.11
1836	Oct 5	" "	£2175.18.3¾
1837	Oct 4	" "	£2419. 5.7¾
1838	Oct 3	" "	£2939.10.9¾
1839	Oct 3	" "	£3120. 4.7½

Source: Co-operative News, Saturday, January 16th, 1892, p 54.

3. This being followed in the same year by another £100 and in October 1837 another payment occurs of £136.

4. Hirst died late 1834.

organisation. The fact that monies to finance the early Yorkshire Movement came from Acton and Tunbridge Wells is significant. Enthusiasm amongst early co-operators was obviously not enough to sustain their vision of a new moral world; money was what was required in order to pass from the shop keeping stage to the self-supporting communities. King had envisaged a period of fifteen years before everyone would be employed in their own "Village of Co-operation", and fifteen years was to most people seeking immediate benefits an eternity. The Yorkshire leadership moved in the direction of patronage to hasten the millennium, but even with outside help only a handful of people were in fact receiving benefits. Instead of working slowly from the bottom upwards these early co-operators were trying to move quickly, and when any problem did develop their fate was in the hands of only a few dedicated members, or if they could find one, a well-to-do benefactor. In retrospect, the early Movement might have experienced more success if it had counted on raising its own capital through its membership rather than receiving any outside assistance.

CO-OPERATIVES IN ECLIPSE

It is however the failure to yield tangible immediate advantages that explains the decline of the first Co-operative Movement. The important benefits held out by Co-operation at that time were to be realised not immediately but in the more or less distant future when the society would no longer be a shop but an agricultural and industrial community. Beset as they were by economic troubles arising from low wages and irregular employment, working people needed immediate benefits, some means of increasing their real income of consumable goods there and then. Co-operation failed at this time to retain the interests of all but a handful of enthusiasts. This is shown by the returns of the Liverpool and Huddersfield Congresses held in October 1832 and April 1833.[1] The Huddersfield Congress shows that the total membership of the twenty societies from Yorkshire was 906, or 0.09% of the population of the West Riding of Yorkshire.[2] The figures shown above indicate

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1. Tables Two, Three and Four. Each society only attracting a small percentage of the working classes in their particular areas.

2. B.R. Mitchell and P. Deane, Abstract of British Historical Statistics (Cambridge, 1971) p 20. Population of West Riding of Yorkshire being 1,013,000 in 1831.

that the Movement was not attracting a significant following and that almost certainly fewer people were now associated with the Movement than in the days of Thomas Hirst. The model of co-operative development formulated by the early pioneers was still not sufficiently fashioned to attract more than a mere handful of scattered activists. Grand aspirations could not be converted into a practical package with mass appeal.

The exchanges that had cropped up all over the country in the early 1830's had never solved the problem of supplying food stuffs, which most of the depositors wanted in exchange for their products, and whilst meeting to some degree the needs of handicraft, small producers did not meet the needs of the factory worker. To handle foodstuffs and factory products required a much bigger and more elaborate organisation covering the whole country, and a comprehensive national system of exchange embracing all kinds of labour and goods. Owen devised a scheme for a system of national labour exchanges, dealing with the products of co-operative labour, exchange to be for fair equivalents and devoid of profit making. The co-operative societies producing for such exchange would, according to Owen, be organised and financed by the trade unions. To effect this, a national organisation of trade unions was necessary. Owen therefore floated the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union.

Repeal of the combination Acts in 1824 had seen a rapid revival of associations to protect and improve wages and conditions of members. Some leaders were ardent Owenites and had ambitions of making the trade unions into the instruments of workers emancipation from capitalism. The disappointment of many workers with the Parliamentary Reform Act of 1832, which had denied the franchise to the working classes, caused hopes and interests to swing from political to industrial action. Hence Owen was able to find a ready hearing in the trade union world. The London Co-operative Congress in October 1833, was advertised as "The Co-operative and Trade Union Congress" and it was here that Owen made proposals for a Grand National Moral Union of the Productive Classes of the United Kingdom, and at a conference in London the

following February the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union of Great Britain and Ireland was formally established.[1] Even though the big unions of the day did not join, still, according to the Webbs, "Within a few weeks the union appears to have been joined by at least half-a-million members, including tens of thousands of farm labourers and women."[2] The cause of all the trouble was felt to be the competition in the sale of their products, and conducting their affairs individually meant that these problems could not be overcome. Owen's scheme was for the formation of national companies of production, each company comprising all the individuals engaged in a particular trade or manufacture. These companies would then exchange their products with each other upon the principle of equitable exchange of labour for a fair equal value of labour. Later Owen envisaged that the master traders and manufacturers would unite with these operatives and so even would the Government.[3] Even at this stage Owen was still hoping that his scheme would be followed up by the Government, thus displaying the same hope as was characterised in the debate concerning his Villages of Co-operation.

The objectives of the union were, however, confused, Owen always placing great store in the belief that the ruling classes would see the great benefits of his scheme and therefore put them into practice, whilst the more radical elements called for a revolutionary change in the social, economic and political structure of Britain. Meanwhile, the rank and file had more immediate plans. They believed that this huge organisation had the power to dictate to their local employers - hence outbreaks of local strikes and lock-outs - which the new union had not the means to support. Strong opposition from employers, and

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1. Owen convened and chaired this Congress.
2. S and B. Webb, The History of Trade Unionism (1894), p 135.
3. James Morrison, editor of the Pioneer (a Trade Union Journal) and J.E. Smith, editor of The Crisis exercised great influence and believed that Owen's scheme could not occur without a struggle and that the G.N.C.T.U. must prepare itself to wage that struggle.

the arrest and trial of the "Tolpuddle Martyrs" resulted in the rapid collapse of the union in the summer of 1834. These ideals did not die, they lingered on throughout the nineteenth century in trade union circles and were revived in the syndicalist and industrial unionist Movements of the early twentieth century.

After 1834 "Owenism had lost its key position as the predominant influence on working-class thought."[1] It was a fact that the ordinary co-operative society had never much interested him except when he believed they could be used as instruments for the instant realisation of his millennial hopes. He was still very much interested in community making and in bodies of adherents who made the establishment of co-operative communities their objective, and accordingly there was still a link between the Owenites and the co-operators because Owenite societies which aspired to take part in building communities could still conduct retail stores or set up producer co-operative bodies as stepping stones towards the grand objective.

Owenism, therefore, was by no means dead. It ceased to be the centre of a mass Movement, and it became almost a sect, devoted to the propagation of a "radical religion" of benevolence and universal philanthropy, within an ideal of living in communities apart from the persecutions and oppressions of the "old, immoral world."[2] Co-operation

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1. G.D.H. Cole, A Century of Co-operation (Manchester, 1944), p 32.

2. Owen formed the Association of All classes of All Nations in May 1835, and a series of Congresses followed which Holyoake described as "Socialist".. The last of these Congresses was held at Queenwood, in June 1846, at the time when the last Owenite community venture was in the process of liquidation. The delegates found themselves locked out by the trustees and had to meer in a tent. At the Manchester Congress of this series in 1837, another association was formed called the "Rational Community Friendly Society" which was in effect a scheme for spreading Owenite ideas by social missionaries (Holyoake was appointed missionary in Sheffield). In 1838 the two bodies (the AACAN and the NCFS)were joined into one body entitled the "Universal Community Society of Rational Religionists".

remained its faith, but Co-operation no longer meant mutual trading or the establishment of self-governing workshops, or even a mass industrial Movement to supersede competition and exploitation and put national "guilds" based on the trade unions in their place. Owen's new doctrine was, according to Cole,[1] that only the converted, who had thoroughly received the co-operative gospel were fit to enter into the inheritance of the "New Moral World", and accordingly the emphasis was on the process of individual conversion and the gathering of the faithful into little local societies, often meeting in their Hall, which stood ready to contribute their quotas towards the establishment of the Villages of Co-operation planned by the national leaders of the Universal Community Society of Rational Religionists.[2] One such group of Owenites held their meetings in the Hall of Science, Bath Building, Huddersfield.[3] The hall[4] was used for social gatherings and lectures and people were heard to talk in glowing language about the good times coming when people would live in communities, do their share of work, work eventually only four hours a day.[5] The final glory would come for these co-operators when the rich people left outside with no-one to work for them would come and plead to be allowed to come in and join.[6]

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1. G.D.H. Cole, A Century of Co-operation, (Manchester, 1944), p 33.
2. A title shortened to "The Rational Society" in 1843.
3. Erected in 1838.
4. Nearly all branches had lecture halls called social institutes. Lectures and discussions were held, generally on Sunday. Most of the branches held monthly or quarterly festivals in which dancing, recitation, songs of philosophical exposition were the means of entertainment. Most branches had schools or classes, some had Sunday schools, nearly all had libraries. Among the active branches was No.24, the Rochdale branch, from which was to spring the modern Co-operative Movement.
5. Owen Balmforth in his A History of Fifty Years Progress, 1860-1910 (Manchester, 1910), p 27 was given information concerning this branch from an "old friend" who attended these early meetings.
6. Two of the creditors of the Queenwood society came from Huddersfield i.e. Mr. Samuel Mitchell and Mr. Samuel Shepherd. O. Balmforth, A History of Fifty years progress, 1860-1910. Huddersfield Industrial Society Ltd., (1910), p 28.

The demise of the Co-operative Movement that sought its ends by establishing and developing co-operative societies was witnessed at the eighth Congress in Halifax held between April 20-21st, 1835. The decline is shown in terms of the small number of societies represented - twelve. All twelve societies, sending 21 delegates, came from the West Riding of Yorkshire.[1] Very little is known about this Congress but what is certain is that no other congress was held after this poorly attended meeting.[2] Huddersfield, even though its trading figures indicate that it was doing well, was no longer a pioneer in advancing the causes of Co-operation. Nobody seems to have taken the place of Hirst in propagating the co-operative gospel. The Movement had never been able to claim a unity of interest; societies put their local interest before that of any central body, this being shown in the poor support given to the wholesale society, and the poor response in heeding resolutions passed at Congresses.

Just as the societies failed to achieve lasting unity, so their members were incapable of standing together for long. As a class, working people were poorly educated, and it was difficult for many of them, quite ignorant of business to take an intelligent interest in the society's affairs. They were prone to follow the line of least resistance, neglecting to attend meetings which meant they failed to make themselves acquainted with the principles and proceedings of the society, and in doing so placed blind confidence in their trustees or other officers so long as the society appeared to be prosperous.[3] In an emergency, when coolness and confidence above all were needed, their ignorance made them liable to panic, and in that state of mind they would trust nobody and nothing, and would desert the society.

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1. Bradford, Halifax, Horbury, Huddersfield, Jammy Green near Holdsworth, Mixenden Stones, Mixenden Rocks, Mixenden Lane, Ripponden, Shibden, Clayton and a society called "Dolphin". Co-operative News, May 24th, 1879, p 343.

2. Co-operative News, May 24th, 1879, p 343 records that at the Barnsley Congress, held in March/April 1834, the Co-operators' main concern seems to have been the conviction of the Tolpuddle Martyrs and a joint meeting with local trade unionists in the linen trades saw a public meeting being held with an attendance of 6000 people.

3. Thus leaving management in the hands of a few individuals: these and many other points are shown in the Proceedings of the Fourth Co-operative Congress, Liverpool, 1832, i.e. not auditing accounts not looking after purchases made for them, incapacity or dishonesty of storekeepers or managers.

The state of the law was a very real obstacle to development, since the only kind of commercial association that the law would protect was a partnership. Societies, which could not take the risk of leaving their property unprotected, had to vest it in trustees. The trustees could hold office for life, they inevitably tended to become a committee of management, and might behave as autocrats, for they were in law the owners of the society's property and the members as a body had no control over them. The more responsibility a trustee shouldered, the less was felt by the ordinary members. In the event of the society's failure it was the trustees who were liable for its debts. Societies suffered from a whole host of problems involving business management. The proper management of stocks was an unknown art, societies profits were dispersed and otherwise misapplied, when according to strict theory, the profits of their trade should have been added to the society's capital. The division of profit was, therefore, commonly made according to capital holdings. Division according to purchases was practised by the Meltham Mills society, but as a rule, the larger shareholders secured the larger dividends, irrespective of purchases, and the societies lost the advantages that the modern dividend system, by rewarding the loyalty of the purchaser, would have secured them.[1] It is this failure to yield tangible immediate advantages that must provide one of the main reasons for the decline of the first Co-operative Movement. Also a potent root of failure was the old idea of the "superiority of production" which led these co-operators to organise labour first and search for consumers afterwards.[2]

We must not look at the Co-operative Movement in isolation for there were many external factors at work, that influenced the development process. With varying emphasis from time to time the centre of working class attention had ranged from trade unionism and Co-operation to political reform and to the struggle against the Poor Law of 1834. In the later 1830s Chartism replaced Owenism as the predominant working-class gospel.[3] The contention of the Chartists was that no amelioration

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1. And probably by a few other societies in England and Scotland.
2. P. Redfern, The Story of the C.W.S., (Manchester, 1914), p 8.
3. And Feargus O'Connor, in place of Owen, became the revered leader of the main body of the miners and factory workers.

of working-class conditions could be expected from a Parliament elected by universal manhood suffrage, and that such schemes as the Owenites had in their heads were mere utopian waste of energy. Indeed, the pre-Chartist newspaper the Cosmopolite as early as 1833 said that there were continued obstacles found in Co-operation:

> "Nothing has lasted long that has began. And though we may be told that people are not yet prepared for this new state of society, we have the feeling invincible that they will never be prepared because neither god nor nature has so prepared them; nor are they morally capable of preparing themselves so as to receive superior advantages from this proposed state of society."[1]

The dislike for Co-operation, amongst certain radicals is clearly illustrated when the Cosmopolite calls them an "Esquimaux kind of association".[2]

THE SEEDS OF THE NEW MOVEMENT

Of over forty co-operative societies formed in Yorkshire during the pre-Rochdale period, the three[3] survivors, Meltham Mills, Ripponden and Skelmanthorpe[4] were all societies that, in the main concentrated all their efforts into retailing rather than production, even though it is evident that Ripponden and Skelmanthorpe had envisaged in their rules that their ultimate aim would be community on land.[5] Meltham Mills was established in 1827, making it the oldest recorded society in Yorkshire. However, it remained in obscurity for nearly 50 years.

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1. No.31, Saturday 16th November 1833, p 241.
2. Doubtful
3. I have not included Kirkheaton, because of the strange and unique practices followed in that village.
4. The first property of this society was acquired on September 22nd, 1838, for the purpose of a shop. Lawton, op.cit. p 45.
5. This desire to return to the land was placed in the rules of many societies, even Rochdale, but never got beyond the rule book.

Indeed the Editor of the Co-operative News recalled that when analysing a number of balance sheets for 1870, he was "no little startled" to find that a co-operative society had, for 43 years, existed at Meltham Mills and which had divided profits amongst all members since its formation.[1] To ascertain the history of this society the Editor wrote requesting information, and Robert Wilson, the Secretary of the Meltham Mills society replied on 27th May 1871. Wilson informed the Co-operative News that when they commenced their store Co-operation was becoming strong, "but on a system of the profits accumulating, which we knew would never answer, so we adopted the plan of paying profits on the amount of purchase[2] and by so doing we stood firm when all the others fell."[3] It is quite understandable that this isolated co-operative could have existed without creating much interest: it was in a remote part of Yorkshire and the people of that age were not accustomed to travelling far beyond their home village.

The village of Meltham Mills owed its existence and prosperity to the works of Messrs. Jonas Brook and Brothers who manufactured sewing cotton. It appears that amongst the skilled labour force at the works were David Redfearn, James Taylor and Joseph Woodcock, and these men laboured "in season and out of season to spread their ideas."[4] Finally, a meeting was held in one of the workshops of the mills and it was decided to establish a society, to fix shares at £1 each, and that the profits were to be paid upon the amounts of goods purchased.[5] Why these co-operators did not follow the pattern of most of their neighbours is uncertain; perhaps it could have something to do with the fact that

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1. Co-operative News, September 30th,1871, p 44. The Editor prided himself in his knowledge of the oldest societies - he thought Meltham Mills was at first a printing error.

2. No exact proof was available that Dividends on Purchases were given in 1827. Wilson became secretary in 1840, but the previous secretary would not give up his books claiming they were his own, therefore Wilson had to start a new book for the purpose. Also in 1860 the store was rebuilt and many books were burned.

3. Co-operative News, September 30th, 1871, p 44.

4. Handbook of 27th Co-operative Congress, Huddersfield, June 1895, p 104.

5. Each member to take up to five and no more.

their first meeting was held in the mill of Jonas Brook. In fact Jonas Brook, a partner in the thread mills was instrumental in advancing the co-operative society.[1] Paternalistic employers were not uncommon in co-operative development, and in the case of Meltham Mills, it would have been highly unlikely for Jonas Brook to advance a scheme of co-operative production, as the skills of his workmen could have been turned against him.[2]

Wilson was able to give a good account of the events leading up to the decision to divide profits in accordance with purchases; he also enclosed the wording of rule eight which reinforces this position; "That all monies arising from the contributions shall be laid out in the purchase of goods for the shop, and the profits arising therefore shall be equally divided amongst the members according to the amount each has purchased at the shop."[3] Wilson seems to be a reliable witness for the share ledger corroborates that the Meltham Mills society was giving a dividend in 1840 of one shilling and four pence in the pound.[4] The first name in the ledger is that of David Redfearn who seems to have spent £34-0-0 in the store which meant that he received £2-5-11 in the form of dividend.[5] The ledger also confirms that members were to subscribe £5 towards share capital. Another contributory factor to the society remaining unknown for so long could have been the fact that it was not registered. In 1853 an application to register was made but they could not agree with Tidd Pratt, the Registrar. Apparently a copy of the rules did not please him and he wanted them altered, but defiantly the society decided that as their rules had suited them for 26 years they would remain as they were, and even in 1871 the society still had not registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act.

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1. According to Co-operative News, August 25th, 1923, p 5, article on "Dividend on Purchases a Hundred Years Ago".
2. This point will be considered in Chapter Four of this thesis.
3. Co-operative News, October 7th, 1871, p 51. Wilson said this was the same rule as the one contained in first rule book in 1827.
4. Page One of the 1840 Ledger appears in Table 5.
5. They did not term their profit as dividend, perhaps the influence of Brook made them regard any surplus as profit.

TABLE FIVE PAGE ONE OF MELTHAM MILLS CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY'S LEDGER FOR THE YEAR 1840

Name of Member	Contribution	Money	At ls.4d. pound	Profit	Contribution	Profit Paid
1. David Redfearn	£5-0-0	£34- 4- 0	"	£2- 5-11	£5-0-0	£2- 5-11
2. Jonus Hirst	£5-0-0	75-18- 5½ 1- 0- 0 74-18- 5½	"	4-19-10½ 2- 2- 4 2-15- 6½	£5-0-0	2-15- 6½
3. John Wood Smith	£5-0-0	45- 9- 1 1-15- 6½ 43- 3- 6½	"	2-18- 2½ 1-15- 6½ 1- 2- 8	£5-0-0	1- 2- 8
4. Moses Worsley	£5-0-0	51- 0-11½	"	3- 8- 0½	£5-0-0	3- 8- 0½
5. Joseph Woodcock Jr.	£5-0-0	93-10- 2	"	6- 4- 8	£5-0-0	6- 4- 8
6. Thos Heptonstall	£5-0-0	55-13- 6½	"	3-14- 2½	£5-0-0	3-14- 2½
7. Thos Westerman	£5-0-0	83- 8- 4	"	5-11- 2½ 17- 5½ 4-13- 9	£5-0-0	4-13- 9
8. Samuel Brook	£5-0-0	89- 2- 0 14- 5 88- 7- 7	"	5-17-10 2-18-11 2-18-11	£5-0-0	2-18-11
9. John Wood, Twister	£5-0-0	90- 1- 0½ 1- 7- 9½ 88-13- 3	"	5-18- 2½ 2- 4-10½ 3-13- 4	£5-0-0	3-13- 4
10. John Broadbent	£5-0-0	48- 4- 1	"	3- 4- 3	£5-0-0	3- 4- 3
11. John Quarmby	£5-0-0	67- 0- 5½ 66-13- 5½	"	4- 9-11½ 18- 4 3-10- 6½	£5-0-0	3-10- 6½
12. John Sanderson	£5-0-0	91-10- 9	"	6- 2- 0½	£5-0-0	6- 2- 0½
13. Elijah Hirst	£5-0-0	36- 8- 2	"	2- 8- 6½	£5-0-0	2- 8- 6½
14. John Redfearn Jnr.	£5-0-0	48- 1- 5	"	3- 4- 1	£5-0-0	3- 4- 1
15. John Crowther	£5-0-0	40- 4-10	"	2-13- 7½	£5-0-0	2-13- 7½
16. Samuel Waterhouse	£5-0-0	36-15- 6 16- 1 35-19- 5	"	2- 7-11½ 16- 1 1-11-10½	£5-0-0	1-11-10½
17. Samuel Hirst	£5-0-0	19- 6- 5½	"	1- 5- 9	£5-0-0	1- 5- 9
18. Joseph Sykes, Twister	£5-0-0	58- 9- 1 13- 2 57-15-11	"	3-17- 0½ 13- 2 3- 3-10½	£5-0-0	3- 3-10½

Source: This ledger is now kept in the Library of the Co-operative Union Ltd. Holyoake House, Manchester.

Local custom could well have influenced the way in which the society divided profits on trade. The Editor of the Co-operative News when he visited Meltham Mills seems to have asked many questions relating to the society and local customs and practices.[1] In the period of the formation of the society the old "badger" gave credit and furnished each customer with a small shop book in which all their purchases were entered until a settlement took place, which varied according to the general condition of the people, the period between pay days.[2] The Meltham Mills co-operators in fact adopted the principle of entering purchases in small books, and allowing fortnightly credits. At the year's end, finding a profit, they decided to apportion it according to the purchases of each member during the year as shown by his purchase book. The Editor also reported that in order that the society might be protected against losses, their rules required each member to pay within the fortnight, or to sacrifice the dividend made upon such overdue accounts. Tight controls seem to have been used in granting credit, and if the shopman permitted credit to any non-member he did so at his own risk, and if any loss did result it was to be taken from his wages by the board.[3] Any contribution due from a member, and not paid within proper time, would be deducted from their profits, and a corresponding sum deducted from the amount of his annual trade, dividend being paid on the remainder only. It was not difficult to see why this society survived whilst others in their area failed. Their aims were not beyond the means of their members, they were seeking to work within the existing framework of society and did not see any immediate need to accumulate capital in order to become producers. The satisfaction of receiving immediate benefits from their endeavours was reflected in what happened when the members received their first

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1. Co-operative News, October 7th, 1871, p 51.

2. A badger is a person "who buys corn and other commodities and carries them elsewhere to sell; an itinerant dealer who acts as a middleman between producer (farmer, fisherman, etc.) and consumer; a cadger, hawker, or huckster". A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles, vol.1 (Oxford, 1888), p 618.

3. And if the board omit to do this, the secretary is compelled to take it from the board's capital or profits.

dividend payment in 1828.[1] Some of those who received a few pounds in dividend had never before possessed so much capital, and their feelings were so strong that they found expression in action. "A spontaneous and hearty demonstration was held in honour of Mr. Redfearn, his house being visited with the crowd singing a few lines in his praise."[2]

THE RIPPONDEN SOCIETY

It has already been shown that the Ripponden society had never followed up its original aims, that of establishing a "Village Community" or employing its members. From its inception this society followed the path of consumer co-operation. The main difference between Ripponden and Meltham Mills was the way in which profits were redistributed, Ripponden dividing the surplus capital equally amongst the founders, regardless of purchasing characteristics.[3] No early records in the form of minute books exist for this society, but it is possible to gain some idea of its workings by means of fines and stock records.[4] In order to keep members actively interested three or four committee-men were elected every three months, taken from the list of members in rotation, nearly all the early members serving at some time on the committee. This method obviously could be practised in a small society that restricted membership, and so allow everyone to appreciate the problems faced, and the benefits arising from their exertions. Members were fined if they failed to attend meetings, or pay their fortnightly subscription.[5] Thus in 1834 there were 38 people fined,

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1. Handbook of the 27th Co-operative Congress, Huddersfield, 1895, p 104.
2. One of the three pioneers of society.
3. Rule 35 of the Ripponden society states "The shares of those who have entered since the time prescribed for the founders entrance, shall be added to their subscription until they have an equal share with the founders; the dividend of the founders to take place each time the stock is taken." Priestly, op.cit., p 43.
4. These records are reproduced in J.H. Priestley's, The History of the Ripponden Co-operative Society Ltd. (Halifax, 1932), p 45.
5. A fine of two pence was made for all members who did not pay their subscription or attend meetings - this was a practice in most societies, and was also common in friendly societies.

JAMES CRABTREE.
A Founder.
Treasurer - 1834–1837

ROBERT HOLT.
Vice President - 1838
President - - 1857
Auditor - 1863–69
Trustee - - 1869—

PHILIP PLATT.
Agent - 1834–1859

this figure increasing to 84 in 1838.[1] The dedication of these early co-operators is also evident when the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Agent and Salesman were appointed every year at the annual meeting held on Christmas Day.[2] These Ripponden co-operators, although "narrow and exclusive" in their aims displayed a commitment and dedication far in excess of those societies that followed more ambitious co-operative schemes.[3]

What the Ripponden Co-operative Society was in effect was a retail store, and this is aptly illustrated in the stock list for October 3rd 1842. Not only were they providing their weaver members with the raw materials of their trade, but also every requirement for an ordinary family was available for purchase, from footwear through to hats, all the basic foodstuffs, hardware and brewing materials. Priestley even identifies the use of such items as "Whitworth Bottles, Diaccolum, Rhubarb and Magnesia", items that were used by the women of the village who knew more about simple remedies in times of need than today.[4] Treacle was one of the most popular items on the stock list, valued at £15-7 shilling, and when purchasing this item the customer would have to bring his own can or pot. Tea and coffee were obviously not yet central items in the family budget, especially when compared with the brewing ingredients listed. This stock list showed the true nature of the society; it was providing all the basic necessaries of life to its members, who would be duly rewarded for their loyalty by receiving a proportion of any profits made. The Society was under the strict attention and control of its members and ideological dreams seem to have been jettisoned as soon as it was realised that their approach would lead to the immediate and secure use of their surplus capital. It is possible that the experience of the Ripponden society was the

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1. J.H. Priestley, The History of the Ripponden Co-operative Society, Ltd. (Halifax, 1932), p 45.
2. Huddersfield co-operative often met on Christmas Day.
3. By 1354 each member received profits according to his purchases.
4. Priestley, op.cit. p 61.

inspiration for the Rochdale Pioneers. Amongst the first members of this Yorkshire society were John and James Holt, and among the first officials of the Rochdale Pioneers, in 1844, were two of the same names. No definite link has yet been established, but what is certain is that any practical thinking man, who had witnessed Co-operation in Ripponden, regardless of the obvious drawbacks, would have seen in that society, the basis on which a successful society could be established.

It seems that schemes based on definite and rigid ideological frameworks were never as successful as those which were able to adapt and modify their aspirations to the requirements of the ordinary worker. Early Yorkshire co-operative development seems to have had very noble ideals, but they always appeared to be opposed by the strongest practical attitudes and needs of the times. To achieve success Huddersfield and its satellite societies had to rely on being financed by outsiders, and this outside influence seemed to throw the whole Movement out of equilibrium. Immediate benefits, like those achieved at Meltham Mills, Skelmanthorpe and Ripponden, were dwarfed in importance by the almost reactionary desire to turn society upside down.[1] Time always seemed to be running against the advocates of producer Co-operation, but the dream persisted for generations to come.

Yorkshire was clearly a leading centre of early co-operative development. Thomas Hirst was most probably responsible for establishing more societies than any other individual, and that includes the post-Rochdale period. His missionary tours were one of the high features of the early Movement and must have converted many to the cause, who were to form the next generation of co-operators.[2] Yorkshiremen played a leading role, not just in expounding their economic and social gospel, but in their practical works, such as the establishment of the wholesale society and manufactories. At the early Congresses it was, more often than not, the voice of Yorkshire co-operators that was the source of new ideas and the promoter of greater unity. The

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1. Even if this was not revolutionary in a violent sense.
2. Hirst most probably influenced some of the Rochdale Pioneers, for he visited the town on more than one occasion to lecture.

influence of Owen, King, Hodgskin, Thompson and Christian ideals are all evident within this early social and economic Movement, but it at no time threatened violent revolution. It sought to change a cruel world into a more equitable one.

> "It is not, then, the glory of personal courage I would advocate, but the ten-fold glory of moral courage, of co-operative courage, exerted in defence of our own rights, without violating the rights of even our oppressors."[1]

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1. Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator, April, 1832, p 10.

CHAPTER THREE

ROCHDALE'S PLACE IN HISTORY

As has been seen in Chapters One and Twc, the early Co-operative Movement was not a story of complete failure. It proved in many ways that by operating in accord with co-operative principles character itself would be improved. The knowledge and experience gained in managing helped eventually when the time was right for the successful stage of Co-operation. By their educational efforts and encouragement and promotion of thrift, temperance and self-help, these early co-operators established the major principles that are still evident in today's Co-operative Movement. It has been shown that the early Movement was not a class Movement; it appealed to all classes, there was a strong democratic influence, and a definite lack of confidence in the ability of any radical reforms being carried out by the Government. The early Co-operative Movement suffered from a lack of good business skills, the law was unsatisfactory, and the lack of capital accumulation and credit facilities led to financial disaster for many societies.[1] As well as these immediate weaknesses, other factors helped to bring the downfall of early co-operative ventures. Factory legislation was called for by great sections of the community, many struggled to bring in the Reform Bill, agitation against the Poor Laws and in support of the Chartist Movement were among the distractions. The thoughts of the masses were concerned with these other major causes so that co-operation must have appeared like child's play to the people trying to radically alter the old order of society.

OTHER SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The 1830's and 1840's witnessed the development of a number of different social and economic struggles. Political reform, the struggle against the new Poor Law of 1834, Chartism, Corn Law Repeal and Factory Reform exercised the minds of many people. Against this background the group known as the Rochdale Pioneers founded their Toad Lane store in

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1. An early co-operative formed in Rochdale in 1830 came to grief due to the giving of credit. Bonner, op. cit., p 42.

1844. There were amongst their ranks both Corn Law Repealers and Factory Reformers as well as Owenites, and there were also Chartists who remained devoted adherents of Feargus O'Connor. Two of the Pioneers Miles and Samuel Ashworth, went away for a time after the store begun, to settle on O'Connor's Land Colony of Charterville - the successor of Queenwood.[1] Chartism, foiled in its political objectives, had sought refuge in an individualistic utopianism which was hardly less utopian than Owen's communistic dreams. Both left the ardent spirits among the workers depressed, frustrated, defeated, but at a juncture which held unexpected promise of better days. The more harmful effects of the Industrial Revolution were abating and the wealth engendered by the new industrialism was at last beginning to filter down to the working classes.

External factors such as these, should not be overlooked. However, in the case of co-operative origins and development these external influences were tempered and in a number of cases cancelled out by local considerations and conditions. It was noted in the previous chapter that a number of societies developed in a unique fashion, owing their existence to local factors, and in Chapter Four this point will become more evident. The Rochdale society decided early in their history to dissociate their new society from the "rational religion" professed by the Owenites, or atheism preached by Holyoake. Their principle of political neutrality tried to distance the Movement from the various brands of Chartists and Socialists and the adherents of the Anti-Corn Law League. Neutrality between the rival factions was an important element in getting the co-operatives established on a sound footing, that would therefore appeal to all sections of the community.

THE TOWN OF ROCHDALE

Rochdale was an industrial town experiencing the miseries and benefits of the Industrial Revolution. The town had as its staple trade for centuries, flannel weaving. However, the introduction of the

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1. A full list of the Rochdale Pioneers appears in Table 1.

power loom resulted in the hand loom weavers finding it increasingly difficult to secure employment. On the credit side the new cotton industry was growing, together with coal mining and machine making. Many of the newcomers to the town were Irish and friction existed between the new and old inhabitants. Thus there was a great deal of agitation in which the handloom weavers played a leading part.[1] There was a strong radical element in the town, and records show that Rochdale people involved themselves in trade unionism, the Ten-Hours Movement, and the free trader, John Bright, was a townsman.[2] Early attempts at Co-operation were visible, in the 1830's, flannel weavers had formed the Rochdale Friendly Co-operative Society. The early Yorkshire co-operators visited Rochdale on a number of occasions. Thomas Hirst had visited the town in 1832, and John Heaton, the agent for the Huddersfield Co-operative Society, was appointed to visit Rochdale after the flannel weavers society had requested information from the "most successful" society of the early 1830's.[3] Also active in Rochdale in the 1840's were the Owenites, and regular meetings were held in the town under the guise of the Universal Community Society of Rational Religionists.

THE ORIGINS OF THE PIONEER'S SOCIETY

The early flannel weavers' society survived until 1835, foundering upon credit trade.[4] But it does appear that some of the Rochdale Pioneers were associated with this early co-operative venture. Indeed, some of the Owenite members of the failed co-operative continued to meet in the home of James Smithies. By the end of 1837 moves were afoot to establish the Universal Community Society of Rational Religionists

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1. Table One clearly shows the role played by the flannel weavers.
2. Also, Richard Cobden was M.P. for Rochdale in this period.
3. Early Congress returns indicate that the Rochdale weavers society was employing ten members and their families. Page 70 of this thesis.
4. A. Bonner, British Co-operation, (Manchester, 1961), p 42.

TABLE ONE LIST OF THE TWENTY-EIGHT ROCHDALE PIONEERS

	OCCUPATION
Ashworth, George	Flannel Weaver
Ashworth, Miles	Flannel Weaver
Ashworth, Samuel	Flannel Weaver
Bamford, James	Shoemaker
Bent, Hugh	Tailor
Brooks, David	Block Printer
Chadwick, Thomas	Hatter
Collier, John	Mill Engineer
Cooper, William	Flannel Weaver
Daly, James	Joiner
Hill, John	Hatter
Holt, James	Weaver
Holt, John	Slubber
Howarth, Charles	Warper
Maden, James	Flannel Weaver
Mallalieu, William	Cotton Band Manufacturer
Manock, James	Flannel Weaver
Riley, James	Deviler
Rudman, Benjamin	Flannel Weaver
Scowcroft, John	Hawker
Smith, Jos	Woolsorter
Smithies, James	Woolsorter
Standring, James	Flannel Weaver
Taylor, Robert	Flannel Weaver
Taylor, William	Power Loom Overlooker
Tweedale, James	Clogger
Whitehead, John	Weaver
Williams, William	Overlooker

Source: A. Bonner, British Co-operation (Manchester, 1961), p 499.

and branch No.24 was formed in 1838. The new branch was often addressed by Owenite missionaries, and a Sunday School was soon opened. By 1841, branch 24 was collecting money for the Queenwood Community.[1] However, disappointment with the Queenwood venture caused the Rochdale branch to consider other ways of establishing a community. They were acquainted with Dr. King's Co-operator, and others had been associated with other co-operative community ventures. It was not surprising therefore that they turned again to try this method.

Another factor that led to the establishment of the Pioneer society is recorded by William Cooper in an account to Professor Fawcett in 1866, on the formation and early history of the society.[2] Apparently at the end of 1843 and the beginning of 1844 the flannel weavers and spinners of Rochdale appealed for more wages, but this met with resistance from employers in the town. A turn-out against certain firms ensued, and strikers were supported by those who had remained at work, paying 2s. each weekly. Cooper informed Fawcett that the strike failed due to the fact that weavers and spinners turned out in greater numbers than those who remained at work were able to support. However, approximately thirty of the weavers stayed in the union and continued to pay the 2s. per week with the aim of commencing manufacturing flannels and becoming "their own employers and independent masters".[3] These unionists however soon realised that it would take a considerable time to raise sufficient capital to begin manufacturing, even on a small scale. Soon members began to drop out, but others seem to have discussed the future. The remaining members, men of different persuasions - Owenites, O'Connorites and Teetotalers finally, according to William Cooper, resolved to become their own shopkeepers.

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1. A. Bonner, British Co-operation, (Manchester, 1961), p 43, records that many of the subscribers were later associated with the Pioneer society, and included John Collier (£5); W. Mallalieu (£5); J. Whitehead (£1); James Smithies (£14).
2. Bonner, op.cit. p 519 Appendix IV
3. This does appear to have been a large sum to be paid weekly.

> "It happened in Rochdale - as in most other towns - that there were then Societies of Chartists Teetotalers and Socialists and each of these pleaded that theirs was the best plan for bettering the position of the working classes."[1]

William Cooper's letter to Professor Fawcett summed up the conflicting solutions that were present amongst these early Pioneers, and the way in which it was finally decided to establish a retail store. The theme of this letter will reappear again and again in subsequent chapters.

> "As all the weavers were not likely to commence Manufacturing very soon; that all men could not be persuaded in a day to become Teetotalers; that the ruling classes would be a long while before they granted the charter; that competitive society could not be converted into communities of united interests in a reasonable time; this question arose, what can and shall be done and somebody or several persons said "let us become our own shopkeepers".

OBJECTS AND PRINCIPLES

The next step was to draw up the rules and regulations for this new enterprise, and it is very clear that the Owenites played a very significant part in this undertaking. To assist them in their task it appears that the Co-operators used the rules of the Owenite insurance society - "The Rational Sick and Burial Society". Charles Howarth was the main architect and went to great pains in the first rule ("Law the First") to state the objects for which the society was formed:

Objects

> "The objects and plans of this society are to form arrangements for the pecuniary benefit, and improvement of the social and domestic condition of its members, by raising a sufficient amount of capital in shares of one pound each, to bring into operation the following plans and arrangements.
>
> The establishment of a store for the sale of provisions, clothing, etc.

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1. A. Bonner, British Co-operation, (Manchester, 1961), Appendix IV, p 519

The building, purchasing or erecting of a number of houses, in which those members desiring to assist each other in improving their domestic and social condition may reside.

To commence the manufacture of such articles as the society may determine upon, for the employment of such members as may be without employment or who may be suffering in consequence of repeated reductions in their wages.

As a further benefit and security to the members of this society, the society shall purchase or rent an estate or estates of land, which shall be cultivated by the members who may be out of employment, or whose labour may be badly remunerated.

That as soon as practicable the Society shall proceed to arrange the powers of production, distribution, education and government, or in other words to establish a self-supporting home colony of united interests, or assist other societies in establishing such colonies.

That for the promotion of sobriety, a temperance hotel be opened in one of the society's houses as soon as convenient."[1]

These objectives at first sight seem a curious hotch potch. They are in fact, a gleaning from the fields of Owenism and of early co-operative experience. Indeed this plan has a close resemblance to the model rules of the early co-operative Congresses, which were drafted by the Yorkshire co-operator, the Rev.Dunn.[2] The establishment of a store for the sale of provisions needs little additional comment at this stage, out of it grew the modern Co-operative Movement. Point two goes back to the projects of George Mudie and the London Co-operative and Economical Society of 1821.[3] Mudie's plan was in part derived from Owen, he proposed that he and his fellow printers and journalists should club together to acquire premises where they could live as a community and carry on their trades for their common benefit. When in 1868 the pioneers did actually embark on house building for their members, the notion of community living implicit in the formulation of their original

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1. A. Bonner, British Co-operation, (Manchester, 1961), p 46.
2. Chapter 2, p 46-47 of this thesis records the drafting of the early rules
3. Chapter 1, p 11 of this thesis details this early phase of development.

objects had dropped away. They built houses in order to provide sound dwellings at reasonable rents, not in order to carry out any project of mutual improvement through living together as they had originally designed. Their third objective concerning the undertaking of manufactures on which to employ their own unemployed members or those in dispute with their employers over wage reductions, goes back to the "Union Shop" Movement of the early 1830's. They were setting out to be at one and the same time a producers'and a consumers'society; and this seemed natural to them because their endeavours were meant to lead up to the creation of a co-operative community in the Owenite model, in which the distinction between producers and consumers would not exist. The fourth object of the Pioneers was the purchasing or renting of land on which they could employ some of their unemployed or under-paid members in producing food stuffs for sale in the store, goes back to what had actually been done by Dr. King's Brighton society about 1828, and by a number of others during the following years. It was in their minds both a step towards community making and a way less ambitious than the founding of a co-operative community, of satisfying the land-hunger which was then so common among the factory workers. The very wide appeal of Owen's Queenwood and of O'Connor's Chartist Land Scheme among the factory operatives shows how keen was the desire to get back to the land among a generation new to the discipline of the factory system. The Pioneers, however, never did in fact purchase their "estate of land" or set their members to work upon it. The fifth object declares the Pioneers' adherence to the full doctrine of "home colonisation" as it was being attempted at Queenwood. To this all the previously declared objects were intended to lead up. This was their Utopia, for which their storekeeping and all the rest of their projects were regarded only as an imperfect and partial preparation. Experience shows that these "home colonisation" aspirations dulled in a period which saw a change for the better in working class standards of living. Better times seemed to shift the emphasis of earlier times. Rochdale more and more concentrated on immediate objectives, turning their back upon revolutionary ideas and schemes for the regeneration of society. The sixth point of establishing a temperance hotel comes almost as an anticlimax. The Pioneers' temperance hotel never came

into being; but the early Co-operative Movement, by its refusal to deal in intoxicating liquor, can be held to have identified itself pretty thoroughly with the last of the original objects of the Pioneers. These objectives that the Rochdale Pioneers set out in their rules were, as has been shown above, not new. Societies like Skelmanthorpe had published their aims ten years before, which were very similar to the Rochdale objectives.[1] But it was the Rochdale society that combined their objectives together with a set of principles that was to form the basis for a successful and lasting Movement.

Principles

After clearly stating their objectives, the rules proceeded to provide for the government of the society. What the Rochdale Pioneers hit on under Howarth's leadership, was not, as some might suggest, simply the idea "dividend on purchases" but a combination of several ideas - none of them individually novel, but making up a total that was essentially new. These ideas were, democratic control, open membership, fixed interest on capital, dividend on purchases, cash trading, supply of pure and unadulterated products, provision for education, and religious and political neutrality.

The principle of democratic control - one man, one vote - was, of course, at the very root of the agitation for the Charter, and it is of the first importance for the history of Co-operation that the Pioneers made it the foundation of their society. Some earlier societies, like Ripponden, based voting on share capital held by individuals. Rochdale thought that any such system would have undermined the essentially simple democratic foundation on which the Consumers' Co-operative Movement rests. Open membership goes closely with equal voting rights. Where it does not exist it is always possible for the members of a successful store to convert it into a source of private profit for themselves by selling at a profit to non-members or by admitting new members only with inferior rights. Some of the unsuccessful co-operatives of the

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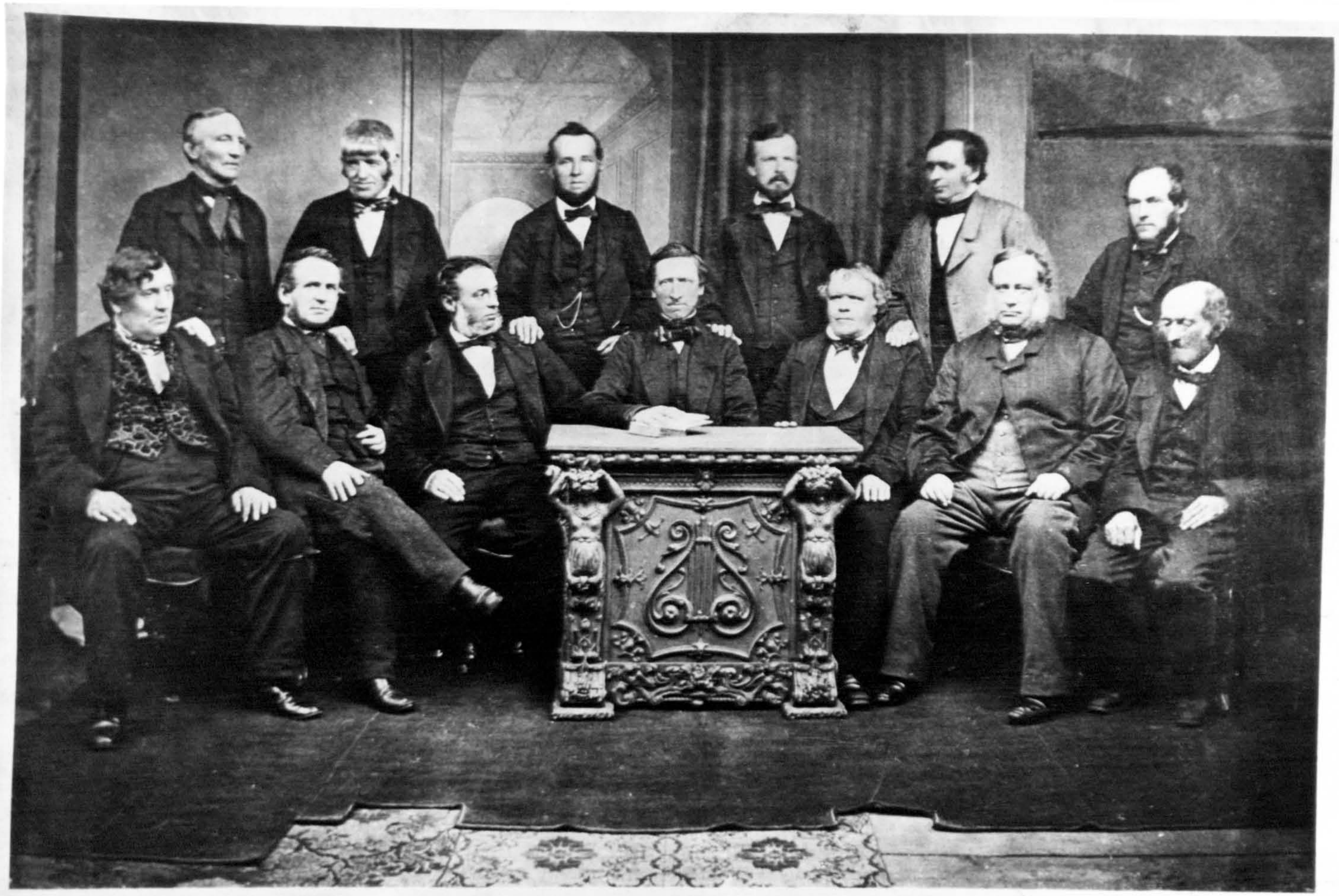
1. Chapter 2, pp 50 and 52 of this thesis considered the early objectives of Co-operators.

early period had used these unco-operative methods, and failed therefore to attract support; Rochdale wanted everyone to share in the benefits of Co-operation.

The third principle of fixed interest on capital was nothing new. The insistence on a fixed return to capital had been one of the first formulated of Owen's own principles. He had it put into force at New Lanark, where he had insisted on applying all profits beyond the fixed return to capital in providing for the welfare of his employees. The Pioneers, by making the payment of fixed interest on paid-up capital definitely a first charge on the trading surplus, gave those who joined the society a solid reason for leaving their savings in deposit with it. The Pioneers were evidently fearful that this practice of paying interest on capital might, unless there were careful safeguards, lead them astray into the evil practices of capitalism, and they were accordingly at pains to limit the amount of capital which any member could hold. In an age of advancing individualism it was a shrewd move by the Pioneers to link individual ownership of capital with its collective use. In doing this, the Pioneers were doing nothing calling for condemnation. They held there was nothing immoral in individual ownership of capital. A worker has as much moral claim to the savings he makes from his wages as he has to the wages themselves as a reward of his labour, and whilst idealistic co-operators will, quite rightly, always strive to increase the fund of collectively-owned capital, the Rochdale Pioneers showed a sound understanding of the people of their day by providing for individual ownership. It certainly facilitated an increase of the amount of capital available for collective use.

With the principle of fixed interest on capital the Pioneers, under Howarth's influence, combined that of dividing the surplus left after payment of interest as a "dividend on purchases". Rochdale was not the first co-operative to pay a dividend on purchases, even though Howarth thought that he had discovered the device. The Meltham Mills



THIRTEEN OF THE ORIGINAL MEMBERS OF THE ROCHDALE EQUITABLE PIONEERS' SOCIETY

Back Row: James Manock, John Collier, Samuel Ashworth, William Cooper, James Tweedale, Joseph Smith

Front Row: James Standring, John Bent, James Smithies, Charles Howarth, David Brooks, Benjamin Rudman, John Scowcroft

society in Yorkshire paid the dividend to its members in 1827, and it is probable that other societies used the dividend principle before the Yorkshiremen. It could be that certain Pioneers were aware of the Meltham Mills practice; however an article in the Co-operator suggests that the inspiration probably came from North of the Border.[1] Alex Campbell informed the readers that the Glasgow Co-operative Society was giving profits in proportion to the money laid out by members as early as 1829.[2] Campbell also revealed that in 1840 he lectured several times to the social reformers in Rochdale, and that in 1843/4 when they were organising their Society of Equitable Pioneers they consulted him and that he had advised them by letter "to adopt the principle of dividing profits on purchases, after paying interest on capital". Robert Owen however was not attracted to the dividend principle; he wanted any surpluses the local societies could achieve to be paid over to aid the formation of co-operative communities instead of being handed back to the members. This probably helps to explain why "dividend on purchases" well known as it had been, was not widely adopted and thus seemed to be a new invention when the Rochdale Pioneers made a success of it. From the standpoint of the Consumers' Co-operative Movement the great merit of the dividend was that it made it possible for co-operators both to eat their cake and have it. It gave members a source of capital savings and, in conjunction with the payment of interest on capital, had encouraged them to leave their savings in the hands of the Movement, and thus invaluably provided the society with the capital needed for its growth.

With the interest on capital and dividend on purchases went, in the Pioneers' plan, the fifth principle of strictly cash trading.[3]

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1. The Co-operator, November 1862, p 110.
2. 11 Coburg Street, Glasgow, was the address given in letter.
3. G.J. Holyoake, The History of the Rochdale Pioneers (1875), p 11. Holyoake believed that "it was part of their socialist education to regard credit as a social evil, a sign of the anxiety, excitement and fraud of competition".

It is again worth noting that the early co-operative society established in Rochdale during 1830 had come to grief through extending credit to its members, and that the Pioneers had this in mind when they framed their new rules. This is highly probable and undoubtedly credit trading was a feature of many of the earlier societies. It arose very naturally. Many of these societies aimed, to the extent of their power, at acting as "Labour Exchanges" for their members' own products. Clearly they could not well be refused anything in payment until their own products had been actually sold, and accordingly they were allowed to take away goods to the estimated value of what they had brought in. So in the general crash of 1834 many societies found themselves with bad debt, which there was no hope of recovering, and many were forced to close their doors. This was a warning against the dangers of credit trading, and the Pioneers were determined to profit by it. They believed firmly that the refusal of credit would be to the advantage of those who accepted this discipline by encouraging them to save up in good times, thus providing them with a reserve on which they could draw, in sheer necessity, when times were bad. They were building a sort of friendly society as well as a co-operative store, and the stimulation of habits of thrift was one of their principal objectives.

The principle of selling only pure and unadulterated goods was of much more crucial importance a hundred and forty years ago than it is today. In 1844 the poor consumer had no safeguard against being sold adulterated goods. He had to take what was offered, especially when he was in debt to his supplier; and it was no small part of the foundation of co-operative success that the co-operative stores could be relied on to supply only pure goods.

Education was another principle, and we note here the Owenite strand again![1] The Pioneers aimed not merely at enrolling members but at making good co-operators of them. The early co-operative venture of the 1830's had to its credit a library with 32 volumes. Religious and political neutrality was adopted by the Rochdale society. Their aim mentioned briefly above was to disassociate their new society from the

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1. The role of education will be studied in greater detail in Chapter Eight, pp 278-300 of this thesis.

"rational religion" professed by the Owenites, or atheism preached by Holyoake. Political neutrality did not mean quite what it would mean today. It meant, in practice, that the society was to be neutral between Socialists, the various brands of Chartists, and adherents of the Anti-Corn Law League. Political neutrality meant in practice neutrality between rival factions which were then appealing for working-class support. These eight principles coupled with the objectives laid out in their first rule formed the foundation on which the new Movement of Consumers' Co-operation at Rochdale was built.

THE OPENING OF THE OWD WEAVERS SHOP

> "On the night when our store was opened, the doffers came out strong in Toad Lane - peeping with ridiculous impertinence round the corners ventilating their opinion at the top of their voices, or standing before the door, inspecting, with pertinacious insolence, the scanty arrangement of butter and oatmeal: at length they exclaimed in a chorus, "Aye, the owd weavers shop is opened at last"[1]

The first meeting of the society was held on 11th August 1844. But before business could start, capital had to be obtained, this was achieved by weekly subscriptions, and a £6 loan from the Weavers' Association. The total capital obtained before the 'owd weavers' shop commenced business was only £28. Thus speculative ideas could not be advanced owing to limited capital. The shop was in fact opened on December 21st 1844, it only opened on Saturday and Monday evenings for the first few months, after which progress is measured by the fact that it opened on every evening except Tuesday.[2] By comparison during this period the Ripponden society store was open at 8 o'clock in the morning and closed at 10.30 every evening except on Saturdays when it remained open until 11.00 p.m.[3] Table Two shows that membership at the end of the first year was 28, so progress was slow. After a year

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1. G.J. Holyoake, The History of the Rochdale Pioneers, (1875), p 14. Holyoake describes the doffers as characteristic urchins who display a precocious sense of the ridiculous.
2. The Rochdale store did not open all day until April 1851, 7 years after its commencement. Bonner, op.cit., p 51.
3. The Duty of Officers, Article 6

TABLE TWO PROGRESS OF THE STORE FROM 1844 to 1857

Year	Number of Members	Amount of Capital	Amount of Cash Sales in Store	Receipts per week December Qtr	Amount of Profit Annual
1844	28	23- 0- 5			
1845	74	181-12- 5	710- 6- 5	30- 0- 0	32-17- 6
1846	80	252- 7- 1½	1,146-17- 7	34- 0- 0	80-16- 3½
1847	110	286- 5- 3½	1,924-13-10	36- 0- 0	72- 2-10½
1848	140	397- 0- 0	2,276- 6- 5½	80- 0- 0	117-16-10½
1849	390	1,193-19- 1	6,611-18- 0	179- 0- 0	561- 3- 9
1850	600	2,299-10- 5	13,179-17- 0	338- 0- 0	889-12- 5
1851	630	2,785- 0- 1½	17,638- 4- 0	308- 0- 0	990-19- 8½
1852	680	3,471- 0- 6	16,351- 5- 0	371- 0- 0	1,206-15- 2½
1853	720	5,848- 3-11	22,760- 0- 0	524- 0- 0	1,674-18-11½
1854	900	7,172-15- 7	33,364- 0- 0	661- 0- 0	1,763-11- 2½
1855	1,400	11,032-12-10½	44,902-12- 0	1,204- 0- 0	3,106- 8- 4½
1856	1,600	12,920-13- 1½	63,197-10- 0	1,353- 0- 0	3,921-13- 1½
1857	1,850	15,142- 1 - 2	79,788- 0- 0	1,491- 0- 0	5,470- 6- 8½

Source: Sales Ledgers

membership had increased from 28 to 74, and capital increased by £153 to £181, sales in the first year amounting to £710. This trading position meant a profit of £22 had been achieved in the first year.

As indicated above, credit was not allowed by the society, and the trade depression of 1847 might have ruined the society if this principle had not been followed. By weathering this storm, confidence in the society grew and the years 1848 and 1849 saw membership, funds, business and profits increased in years of depression. The Pioneers society now appeared to many as the best custodian of working class savings. Thus we see with this new Co-operative Movement, a sturdy self-reliant spirit that had great appeal to the thrifty working man. It was the most solid and impressively successful piece of working-class self-help which emerged from the many experiments of the period, From this early picture it is clear why Smiles described the working class as being identified with "all toilers of hand and brain". For those workers who did not rise, Smiles stressed the value of sound corporate institutions like co-operative societies which gave a ticket to independence.

Table Two shows the impressive increases in trade and membership, these increases enabled a larger range of services to be provided. By 1851 the store was opened daily and the society could also boast a newsroom and library, a clear sign of the strong ideological influence. The Rochdale society soon entered the field of production, investing £100 in the corn mill society.[1] One very interesting aspect of this new venture concerned adulterated foods. The newly ground flour was darker than the adulterated product of private millers, and customers not used to receiving pure food at first rejected the darker product. However, once it was explained to the customers the suspicion was overcome.[2] By 1852 profits were being recorded by the corn mill society. It is clear that a departure from their original aims had developed,

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1. Appointed representatives to the corn mill society, the law not allowing one society to hold shares in another. Bonner, op.cit., p 51.
2. A similar example can be found in Leeds, Chapter 5, p 181 of this thesis.

with less interest in developing a "home colony of united interests." The new policy was that of developing an enterprise on a large scale to meet the needs of several societies.

A NEW MOVEMENT

As indicated in Chapters 1 and 2 forms of co-operation had existed in differing types, long before Rochdale. But it is clear that the modern Co-operative Movement began with the establishment of the Rochdale society in 1844. No Movement developed from those earlier societies and even if they maintained a continuous life, it was a stagnant one. Bonner is very clear in his statement:

> "The fame of the pioneers rests on more than the invention of a successful system of running a co-operative store. They also founded a movement. They had a vision which was not restricted to their own locality and society or to their own day and generation, and they sought to further the progress of the Co-operative Movement as a whole".[1]

All in fact who desired knowledge of or advice on Co-operation sought it at Rochdale, just as in these days they seek it from the Co-operative Union.[2] The pioneers played an active part in the formation of the wholesale society, the insurance society, co-operative education, and above all, they helped and encouraged the formation of other societies.

The influence of the Pioneers is clearly seen in the minutes of numerous societies that were formed in the 1850's and 1860's. In 1858 the Leeds Flour Mill Society resolved

> "that the Board be recommended to carry out the Rochdale principles in the following manner. To retail Flour, Grocery and Provisions at one uniform price to members, Agents and the public - giving tins alike to all purchases of profit yielding articles."[3]

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1. A. Bonner, British Co-operation, (Manchester, 1961), p 56.
2. The position of the Co-operative Union will be discussed in Chapter 8, p 267 of this thesis.
3. Grocery Committee Minutes, Leeds society, October 30th, Minute 3.

It is often recorded in the minute books of societies that deputations be sent to the Rochdale society, to see at first hand the system that was in operation.

> "Resolved that Mr. Bell and Mr. Fenton go to Rochdale as a deputation"[1]

> "This meeting being of opinion that the system of working the Rochdale Pioneer Society, having been found to act more advantageously than ours, this meeting authorise the Board of Directors to adopt the Rochdale Plan as far as is found practicable."[2]

The hard work of William Cooper is also revealed in the records of many societies. During their first years of trading the York Society wrote to Cooper concerning metallic checks and bacon sales. Legal problems, staff problems etc. would often be relayed to Rochdale for solution. Cooper was involved in much of the preparatory work in establishing the Co-operative Wholesale Society. He assisted E.V.Neale in drafting the necessary changes in the Industrial and Provident Societies' Act, and in two years this involved 1,600 postal communications, including letters, petition forms, circulars and receipts.

It is clear, with hindsight, that the future lay with those that sought to accept the fundamentals of the emerging industrial society and mould its influences in favour of the working man. A large number of co-operative societies were formed in the years 1850 and 1851, many in Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire. With the collapse of the Chartist Movement working men in increasing numbers turned their back on revolutionary ideas much to the disgust of people like Thomas Cooper, the Chartist, mentioned in the Introduction.

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1. Grocery Committee Minutes, Leeds society, September 18th, 1856 (no minute number recorded).
2. Special Meeting of Board, Leeds society, October 27th, 1858.

THE CHRISTIAN SOCIALISTS

It is worth mentioning at this stage the role also played by the Christian Socialists.[1] Without their assistance the success of the Rochdale Model of Co-operation might never have occurred. The Christian Socialists believed that the evils of the day arose from the neglect of the Christian obligations of man to man, especially in their economic relations with each other. Selfishness and competition were condemned, the Christian Socialists wanted a living community under Christ, in which no man had a right to call anything he has his own, but in which there is spiritual fellowship and practical Co-operation. One of the Christian Socialists, J.M. Ludlow, was well read in the works of Fourier and Louis Blanc. Blanc had denounced capitalist industry and advocated self-governing workshops organised into self governing industries. The Christian Socialists then proceeded to promote these associations in industry and in 1850 established the Society for Promoting Working Man's Associations, comprising a small number of 'promoters', and the members of the association who were termed associates. However, few of these societies had a long life, some failed within a few months, others changed their character and became private profit making businesses. It is not necessary to go into much detail regarding these associations at this stage for the greatest contribution made by the Christian Socialists concerns the legal status of co-operative societies.

Early co-operative societies were hampered by lack of suitable legislation. Legal status under the 1846 Friendly Societies Act meant that a society could only hold personal property through trustees; thus the honesty of the trustees was of paramount importance. Another legal drawback concerned the Frugal Investment Clause which meant societies were not permitted to trade with other than their own members; producer societies were thereby denied registration. Owing to the fact

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1. The Christian Socialists were active between 1848-1854. They included in their ranks the Rev.Charles Kingsley, the novelist, and E.V. Neale, the first General Secretary of the Co-operative Union.

that the Christian Socialists had within their ranks very able and qualified legal experts, they managed to get the appointment of a committee of the House of Commons to discuss these obstacles. The greatest economist of the day, J.S. Mill, gave favourable evidence on behalf of the Co-operative Movement. Mill in a famous prophesy in 1865 believed that,

> "through the co-operative principle, we could see our way to a change in society, which would combine the freedom of independence of the individual, with the moral, intellectual and economic advantages of aggregate production; and which without violence or spoilation,or even any sudden disturbance of existing habits and expectations, would realise, at least, in the industrial department, the best aspirations of the democratic spirit, by putting an end to the division of society into the industrious and the idle, and effacing all social distinctions but those fairly earned by personal services and exertions".[1]

As a result of the support for co-operation the committee reported in favour of an immediate measure. By 1852 the new act had become law, it was indeed the first act relating to co-operative societies as distinct from friendly societies and joint stock companies. The Act safeguarded the co-operative character of the societies, i.e. members' control of the share capital provisions which would prevent the ownership of a society passing to a few individuals by their purchase of shares. The Christian Socialists ceased to act as an organised group in 1854, but it is true to say that due to their help the modern Co-operative Movement gained the legal position that enabled them to develop as a national body.

The Rochdale form of Co-operation did not follow the road of production as was the case in the earlier period of co-operative development nor the form of Co-operation proposed by the Christian Socialists. We have seen the considerable role played by the weavers in the formation of the Rochdale society. Flannel Weavers needed food and they came face to face with the fact that the commodities that they and their families required were not those that they themselves

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1. J.S. Mill, Principles of Political Economy, (1873), p 476.

produced; that as soon as there is widespread division of labour the consumers of any commodity are necessarily a different body of people from the producers of it. To organise industry from the consumption end, and to place it, from the start, upon the basis of production for use, instead of production for exchange, under the control and direction, not of themselves as producers, but of themselves as consumers was the outstanding discovery and practical achievement of the Rochdale Pioneers.

A NEW AGE OF PROSPERITY

As a result of the growing prosperity in the second half of the nineteenth century, there was a dying down of the spirit of revolt. Laissez-faire and the appeal to self-interest appeared to be justified in their results. Like most working class organisations, with the exception of trade unions, which aimed at checking or reducing the power of the capitalist class, co-operatives were transformed into ones which accepted the new class society and merely sought to improve the workers place in it. Attempts to change the course of event by coercion were discarded. Self-interest was recognised as the dominating motive and thrift became one of the cardinal values.

The acceptance of the new orthodoxy had a profound effect on social movements. The aim was no longer to fight against the new order, but rather to fit the labouring class into it. They must acquire a place by more effective organisation, by the acquisition of property, and above all, by appealing to enlightened self-interest. The justification of the Co-operative Movement based on the Rochdale plan was no longer that it would revolutionise society, but that it was one of the most effective means of reconciling private interest with the public good.

"The stone of Co-operation had often been rolled up the hill elsewhere, and as often rolled down again. Sometimes it was being dragged up by credit when, that rope breaking, the reluctant bell slipped into a bog of debt. At length some enthusiasts gave another turn, when some watchful rascal made away with its profits, which had acted as a wedge, steadying the weight on the hill, and the law being

on the side of the thief, let the great boulder roll back. Another set of devotees gave a turn at the great boulder, but having theological questions on hand, they fell into discussion by the way, as to whether Adam was or was not the first man; when those who said he was refused to push with those who said he was not, and Adam was the cause of another fall in the new Eden, and the Co-operative store found its way once more to the bottom.

> At length the Rochdale men took the stone in hand. They invested an interest for everybody in pushing. They stopped up the debt bogs. They mainly established a wholesale supply society, and made the provisions better. They got the law amended, and cleared out the knaves who hung about the till. They planned employment of their profits in productive manufactures, so that the store and workshop might grow. They proclaimed toleration to all opinions - religious, and heretical alike - and recognised none. They provided for the education of their members, so that every man knew what to push for and where to place his shoulder, and were the first men who landed the great stone at the top."[1]

This colourful analysis by Holyoake clearly recognises the important place Rochdale has in the development of the Co-operative Movement in Britain. Rochdale was not the first co-operative society, but they successfully combined idealism with practical and sound business sense, to establish the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers. The Movement now had a definite framework in which there could develop a successful model of co-operation, and it was a model that did not offend the religious and political tenets of the age. Communitarian ideas were now less attractive and the Victorian ideal of home and the ideas of practical Co-operation in relation to the needs of daily home life more relevant. Attention was now directed towards immediate practical requirements and efficient means of satisfying them.[2] "Let us become our own shopkeepers" was the motivating force that guided the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers.

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1. G.J. Holyoake, The History of Co-operation, (1875), pp 266-267.
2. Chapter Five considers the tangible results of co-operative development, in a century which experienced fundamental changes in retailing and the retailing environment.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ORIGINS OF THE

POST ROCHDALE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT IN YORKSHIRE

It would be a mistake to assume that every other society which developed, post 1844, would follow the well recorded pattern established by the Rochdale Pioneers. Many societies developed in a unique fashion, owing their existence to local circumstances and modes of behaviour. Redemptionists, Chartists, Socialists, Liberals, Tories, Spiritualists, Factory Masters, Coal Owners, Temperance Advocates, the Aristocracy, Trade Unionists, Friendly Society Lodges - all contributed in varying degrees to establishing a multitude of societies, many of which bore little resemblance to the Rochdale society.[1] This Chapter will show that local autonomy, varied economic and social conditions, a strong desire to work for a better future - all helped to mould a Movement in Yorkshire that encompassed a multitude of interests and objectives.

DIFFERENT FORMS OF SELF HELP

Before embarking on an analysis of the origins of the Yorkshire Retail Co-operative Movement it is necessary briefly to review the forms of co-operative activity which developed during the first half of the nineteenth century. The capacity to work together for the achievement of social and economic advance was well developed in Yorkshire. Friendly societies, building societies, temperance societies and trade unions had gained a strong grip well before the establishment of a successful Co-operative Movement. These different movements were ways in which those without political power sought to protect themselves in an increasingly industrialised society. The rules of the Wilson's Darton Collieries Club[2] Darton, near Barnsley, clearly recognised the need for common action, and rule one stated

> "The object of this club is to provide a fund for the relief of its members during illness that has been caused by any accident happening to them while at work, providing such accident was not caused by their own carelessness or misconduct, and for no other purpose whatever".[3]

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1. Chapter Five will show the dates of establishment and geographical distribution of Societies.
2. Established 1st March 1833.
3. Page 3. These rules are deposited at Goldsmiths' Library, University of London and referred to as G.L. 1684.

Between 1815-1875 one sees the development of nation-wide affiliated orders such as the Oddfellows, the Foresters, the Druids and the Shepherds, in areas which like the West Riding of Yorkshire had felt the earliest impact of the Industrial Revolution. These were areas where generally the workers were better able to afford to make provision for sickness and where possibly, the need for such provision was greater than for those who worked on the land. The individual lodges were not mere branches of a central organisation, they maintained full control over their own sick funds and management expenses.[1] There are strong grounds for assuming that such lodges gave many working people the chance to organise their affairs in a methodical fashion, giving them a better understanding and awareness of the value of common action, a training in fact that they could then adopt to other emerging organisations such as the local co-operative society.

Building societies developed as a direct result of the shortage of housing caused by the Industrial Revolution which saw the flocking of the population into the industrial towns of the North and high local birth rates. Clapham observes

> "Yet, so inadequate was the accommodating of the cottages in the originally stone-built and not easily remodelled towns of the Yorkshire valleys, that they were among the most overcrowded places in England."[2]

This was the background to the formation of another strand of self-help similar in many respects to friendly societies that had taken such a strong hold on many industrial workers. Men would join together in clubs to put in their weekly pennies against sickness or death and soon began to extend this system to create a fund out of which houses could be built.[3] When enough money had been collected for one house a ballot

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1. According to P.H.J.H. Gosden, The Friendly Societies of England 1815-75, (Manchester, 1961), p 27.
2. J.H. Clapham, An Economic History of Modern Britain - Vol.2, (Cambridge, 1932), p 493.
3. The first recorded in Yorkshire was the Hill House Bank Building Club, Leeds, established in 1785. E.J. Clery, The Building Society Movement, (1965), p 11.

would be held and the lucky member of the club would gratefully take occupation of his home. Everyone would continue to make their weekly payments until a house had been built for each member. Then the club was wound up, and in this way the first 'terminating' building society came into existence.

Later the two functions of building societies - the collection of weekly payments for subscriptions and the advancement of money for the building of a house - became separate. Some people had spare cash and were willing to invest it in return for interest;others needed a roof over their heads and were prepared to pay interest on a loan with which to purchase a house. So the societies ceased to 'terminate' and became 'permanent'. This development in many ways changed the nature of the societies; they became agencies for the investment of capital rather than for enabling the investors to provide dwellings for themselves.[1] Building societies were not the breeding ground of practical democracy amongst the working classes. Many such as the Alfred Place Terminating society were run by small masters and white collar workers.[2] However, the success of the Yorkshire Building Society Movement must have touched many working class people in financial terms, and this in itself warrants its inclusion in these preliminary observations. Thrift was an important ingredient of Co-operation and the success of building societies offered an excellent example of what was possible if people used their money wisely.

The Temperance Movement probably produced more active co-operators than any of the other self-help organisations. The campaign against drink was only one aspect of a general movement to improve the conditions of the poor. Yorkshire again played a significant part in this movement which had crossed the Pennines from Preston in the early

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1. In the West Riding some of the earliest permanent societies were the Wakefield (1846), Leeds (1848), Otley (1848), Leeds Provincial (now called the Provincial) (1849), Bingley (1851) and Bradford Equitable (1851). Source: Background notes provided by the Halifax Building Society Ltd.

2. Thoresby Society, Vol.XLVI, Part 3 (1961), "Alfred Place Terminating Society 1825-43", by W.G. Rimmer, p 303.

1830's.[1] Almost all the early temperance advocates were Radicals, and many were Chartists. They believed that signing the pledge was the prelude to self-improvement, by which the working class would fit itself for political power. The free churches were also very helpful to this new movement, and some went as far as linking signing the pledge with spiritual rebirth "resembling a second baptism".[2]

Leeds was an important centre for the "Waterdrinkers". The Rev. Jabez Tunnicliffe in 1847 held a crowded meeting in Leeds at which Ann Jane Carlisle addressed girls from local Sunday schools. From this meeting sprang the juvenile organisation "The Band of Hope". By 1874 this one wing of the temperance movement had 5,000 local branches with 800,000 members and by the end of the century this figure had reached 2,000,000.[3] The temperance newspaper the Alliance recorded an "immense meeting" in Leeds having taken place in the Cloth Hall Yard, convened by the Mayor of Leeds "to Petition Parliament in favour of a law for prohibiting the sale of liquor during the whole of Sunday".[4] According to this report 20,000 people attended this meeting and included many leading churchmen of the city. In addition to the churchmen were Dr. F.R. Lees and Mr. J. Hole, two gentlemen who were leading advocates of Co-operation in the city. Yorkshire was a leading centre in the Temperance Movement and branches of the various organisations were scattered throughout the county, especially in the West Riding. Working together for self betterment went hand in hand with sobriety. Co-operation and the Temperance Movement had many common denominators, shared hopes and aspirations.

All these different strands of self improvement were welcomed by a propagandist who came to epitomize many nineteenth century values. This was Samuel Smiles, a Scot, who had very early associations with Yorkshire, firstly as Editor of the Leeds Times and later when he put

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1. The movement had begun in the U.S.A. about 1770 amongst Quakers in Philadelphia.
2. Norman Longmate, The Waterdrinkers - a History of Temperance, (1968), p 55.
3. Known as Bands of Hope - Bands existed throughout the country.
4. Dated Saturday, July 8th, 1854, p 3.

up his surgeon's plate in Springfield House, Holbeck.[1] Smiles is best known for his literary contributions, especially his book, Self Help, which was one of the most widely read books of the nineteenth century. One passage summarizes much of his basic philosophy when he states:

> "The greatest results in life are usually attained by simple means, and the exercise of ordinary qualities. The common life of everyday, with its cares, necessities, and duties, affords ample opportunity for acquiring experience of the best kind, and its most beaten paths provide the worker with abundant scope for effort and room for self-improvement. The road to human welfare lies along the old highway of steadfast well doing and they who are the most persistent and work in the truest spirit will usually be the most successful."[2]

Pride in achievement through self help was an important characteristic of Victorian Britain.

Smiles's patients in Holbeck were not fashionable people, but mainly working men, able to pay for his services through membership of benefit societies. He admired these working men and they obviously respected him greatly. As well as his medical duties Smiles lectured to numerous groups in the city, and in March 1845 he delivered a talk that was to form the nucleus of what was to become known as self-help to delegates of a mutual improvement society.[3] It is possible that some of the delegates present at this meeting could have, two years later, been among the men who formed the Leeds Corn Mill Society, which was established in Holbeck in 1847.

Samuel Smiles did at first question the speculative nature of co-operative societies but later accepted their powerful influence in promoting sobriety.[4]

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1. Smiles arrived in Leeds in November 1838.
2. S. Smiles, Self Help, (1890), p 94.
3. This was in fact 14 years before Self Help was published.
4. Self Help, p 70. He stated "these enterprises (Co-operatives) are of too speculative nature to warrant our anticipating much lasting benefit to the working classes from their adoption".

"The example of the Rochdale Pioneers has exercised a powerful influence on workmen throughout the Northern Counties of England. These societies have promoted habits of saving, of thrift, and of temperance. They have given the people an interest in money matters, and enabled them to lay out their earnings to the best advantage. They have also given the working people some knowledge of business for the whole of their concerns are managed by committees selected at the general meetings of members".[1]

Smiles, who worked in Yorkshire for sixteen years, was in many ways a symbol of his age.[2] "He was middle-class. He had every unpopular attribute that belonged to it in the nineteenth century. He preached; he worked; he saved".[3] The works of Smiles filtered down to most classes, and the term "Self Help" would be utilized in the titles of many of the retail co-operative societies that were to be established in Britain over the next sixty years.

Friendly societies, the Temperance Movement, building societies and the popular ethos surrounding self help all contributed towards establishing the correct environment in which co-operative societies could develop in the changing times of early Victorian Britain. Essentially the Co-operative Movement was an organisation which encouraged the community to organise its affairs in a balance between self-help and mutual help on a formula which combined self-reliance with compassion for others. This chapter will also show that the co-operative society established in a particular area would owe a great deal to local custom and forces that were at work in the various local communities. Local autonomy is a characteristic that must not be ignored when analysing the origins of societies established in Yorkshire after 1844.

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1. S. Smiles, Thrift, (New York, 1875), pp 121-122.

2. In 1845 he became Secretary of the new Leeds and Thirsk Railway; He wrote in both the Leeds Times and Leeds Mercury; In 1854 he became Secretary of the South Eastern Railway Company; In 1863 he became Secretary of the National Provident Assurance Company.

3. Aileen Smiles, Samuel Smiles and his Surroundings, (London, 1956), p 88.

THE LEEDS REDEMPTION SOCIETY

In Chapters One and Two the ideas of Owen were examined in detail together with the aspirations of his followers. The Community idea was strong amongst a small section of the community, and even after the Rochdale Pioneer society was established in 1844 there were still groups of dedicated co-operators who wanted to move towards the goals laid down by Owen. It is clear that the communitarian ideas of Owen and his followers were not dead after 1844, especially in Yorkshire. One such group of supporters was to be found in Leeds and known as the Leeds Redemption Society which was established on the 8th September 1845. According to Holyoake this group first met on Sunday afternoons at the Unitarian Meeting House.[1]

The Leeds Redemption Society, and others established in Norwich and Stockport were formed for the redemption of labour - to enable the working classes to work out their own redemption by union amongst themselves. The Leeds Redemption Society was the largest and most influential and by 1847 had established branches at Bingley, Birstall, Barnsley, North Cave, Hull and Pudsey. The leading personalities in the society were Owenites and Radicals and the chief inspirer, according to J.F.C. Harrison was David Green a publisher of Owenite and Socialist works whose office was situated at 166 Briggate, Leeds.[2]

It was a strongly held view amongst the redemptionists that the interests of capital and labour had become separated and that labour had become a commodity dependent upon capital. They were in fact attacking the whole economic system and their solution was simple - members would subscribe one penny per week to a "Redemption of Labour Fund" which would accumulate and generate enough capital to support their self employment on the land and in self-governing workshops. In the first issue of their newsletter the Herald of Redemption, edited by James Hole, the aims of the Leeds redemptionists were clearly stated in

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1. G.J. Holyoake, Leeds Industrial Co-operative Society Ltd. 1847-1897, (Manchester, 1897), p 2.

2. Thoresby Society Monographs III, No.100, 1952,"James Hole and Social Reform in Leeds", by J.C. Harrison.

an "Address to our Readers" which proposed union in production and in the share of the product:

> "We intend to unite the Labour of all for the benefit of all. In our operations we shall recognise no landlord, no capitalist, no labourers, as separate individuals having separate interests, but all will be landlords,all capitalists, all labourers."[1]

For the first two years of its existence the Leeds Redemption Society worked hard to raise sufficient funds to acquire land on which to start their experiments. Subscriptions were collected weekly with the officers meeting at Austins Temperance Hotel, Briggate.[2] By the beginning of 1847 the society had close on 600 members, and in August of that same year an estate was offered to them in South Wales at Garnlwyd, Carmarthenshire. However, it was already clear that apathy amongst the bulk of the working men of Leeds and insufficient capital hampered this experiment. The Leeds redemptionists did in fact at this time have a shop in Trinity Street, Leeds, only open in the evenings when a member of the committee was in attendance. The main commodity on sale was blackberry jam which was sent from their Carmarthenshire estate. Meanwhile in Leeds at this very point in time a group of men employed by Messrs. Benyon and Company, Holbeck, Leeds, circulated a letter to the working men of Leeds in a similar fashion to the memorial presented by the Hull Anti-Mill Society in 1795.[3]

> "Holbeck Anti-Corn Mill Association
>
> To the working classes of Leeds and its vicinity
>
> We, the work-people at Messrs. Benyon and Co's., Holbeck, in the County of York:
>
> Having experienced much trouble and sorrow of late in ourselves and families, in consequence of the exorbitant price of Flour, do judge it needful for us

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1. January 1847. The Herald of Redemption was published on 19 occasions up to July 1848.
2. Leeds was divided into 15 districts, with a minimum subscription of 1p per week. Full membership could be gained after paying for 6 months + 6d for card. Harrison, op.cit., p 6.
3. Chapter One, p 2 and 3 of this thesis records the text of the memorial.

to take every precaution to preserve ourselves from the invasions of covetous and merciless men, in future. In consequence thereof, we deem it needful to enter into a combination to raise a subscription to the amount of Twenty shillings, to be paid by each member in weekly instalments to be determined on at a meeting which will be held in a Room behind the Union Tavern, on Monday, March 1st, 1847, at seven o'clock in the evening, for the purpose of renting a mill until the funds of the Institution will allow the society to erect a mill of its own, which shall be the property of the subscribers, their Heirs, Executors, Administrators, or Assigns for ever, in order to supply them with flour, and them only.

N.B. The Committee are wishful to raise one thousand members for the purpose of carrying out this noble enterprise. They therefore call upon the working classes to attend the meeting in order to look to their own welfare, and the welfare of their families.

Robert Wilson Ambler
John Park
Joseph Darnley
Robert Ambler
James Jackson
William Ward
Joseph Newell
The Committee"

February 25th, 1847.

This circular generated a great deal of interest within the city for on Monday, March 1st, 1847 between 800 and 1000 people attended a meeting in the school room under the Tabernacle in Meadow Lane in response to it.[1] The meeting was chaired by a Mr. William Eggleston and it was soon resolved

> "That it is expedient to form a society the object of which shall be the buying of corn and preparing flour for the members thereof to be called 'The Leeds District Co-operative Corn Mill'."

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1. The first Minute Book also records that many were turned away. However, Holyoake states in his Leeds Industrial Co-operative Society Ltd; 1847-1897, (Manchester, 1897) that there were only 100 at this meeting.

Robert Wilson Ambler, one of the Benyon signatories, played a significant role at this all important first meeting, making "a few stunning remarks."[1] However, the society established was not dominated by the Benyon men. Two Benyon men were elected to the twenty-one strong first committee - Samuel Haigh and Chas Adams - and Robert Wilson Ambler was added to the committee at the fifth meeting of the society held on Monday, 15th March 1847. At the second meeting the committee recognised the hard work of the employees of Benyons and resolved "that the sum of 5/11 be paid by the treasurer of the committee to Messrs. Benyons Co's men for the expenses incurred by them in this movement." It is interesting to note that the minutes stated that it was a "Movement" that they were involved in.

The Leeds Redemption Society, or more accurately, members of the Society, did not ignore this more restrictive form of co-operation. William Eggleston who was chairman at the first meeting, was a very active member of the Redemption Society in Leeds.[2] Indeed in the Annual Report of the Leeds District Flour Mills Society for the year ending June 30th 1849, the names of both David Green and William Eggleston are very prominent.

The committee of the corn mill society were now meeting regularly to draft rules and they took a close interest in what was going on in the neighbouring co-operative flour mills and probably came into contact with the Hull Anti-Mill Society. "That Mr. Eggleston be paid 8/- for Book from Hull and Minute Books".[3] It is reasonable to assume that this could in fact have been a book relating to the Anti-Mill society and probably could have been a rule book of the oldest society in the country. It is clear that progress was being made with this new co-operative that had emanated from a group of flax spinners angry about the deal they were getting from the private millers of the day.

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1. A resume of this first meeting is given in the first Minute Book dated 1st March 1847.
2. Other redemptionists associated with the Corn Mill society included Robert Meek Carter, John Holmes, William Campbell, Edwin Gaunt, William Bell and James Hole. Holyoake op.cit. p 3.
3. 4th Meeting held on 11th March 1847 records this minute.

These men were driven more by economic considerations than anything else, but on the way this noble concept attracted men with a wider social philosophy, who would do their utmost to direct the society along a more idealistic path. It seems likely that the redemptionists with their limited resources compared their current position with that of this new venture which had, within weeks of its formation, attracted much greater interest than their scheme had in over two years of hard work. It soon became clear that the redemptionists would now seek to influence the corn mill society, to amend its rather parochial and restrictive aims in order to embrace their wider view of society. Men such as Green, Lloyd Jones, Hole and Gaunt wanted to see the transformation of society, and would not want to be involved in a scheme for merely producing good unadulterated flour for their members. The battle would now commence to see which ideology would secure the support of the members.

FLOUR MILLS

As indicated above there were in existence in Yorkshire during the middle years of the nineteenth century a number of flour mill societies.[1] Indeed, the Halifax Flour Mill Society was established in the same year as the Leeds society, 1847. These societies retailed their flour through agents who kept their own shops.[2] One such agent kept a shop at Daisy Croft, Brighouse, where Halifax flour was sold and dividends paid on purchases. There is little doubt that the operators of these kind of societies paved the way for a more general extension of the Co-operative Movement. People became aware of the benefits derived from membership of flour societies, and as in the example of Brighouse, they were encouraged to go one step further and establish a society that would retail all their basic requirements, not just flour. Flour was a very important element in the diets of most people and some societies did in fact originate as merely retailers of flour. The

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1. Societies existed at the following places - Hull, Bradford, Halifax.
2. This practice will be shown in the next chapter of this thesis.

Newsome society started in an old building for the sale of flour only.[1] At Queensbury workers at William Fosters Black Dyke Mills wanted to establish a flour mill society and sought the opinion of William Foster. Foster persuaded his workmen that their best course of action would in fact be to establish a retail society in line with the one established in Halifax and known as the Halifax Industrial Society, rather than to establish a flour mill society and thus compete with the existing Halifax flour society. Flour societies clearly achieved considerable success in Yorkshire and their significance should not be overlooked in any analysis of co-operative retail society origins.

INFLUENCES ON THE MOVEMENT

Employers

The example of Queensbury introduces into this chapter another significant force that helped to establish a number of retail co-operative societies - namely the role played by employers. In Chapter Two it was observed that a local manufacturer gave great encouragement in the formation of the Meltham Mills society in 1827.[2] This pattern continued for the rest of the century and included various manufacturers, iron masters and coal owners. In Meltham, only a stone's throw away from Meltham Mills, the formation of their particular society owed a great deal to Joseph Hirst, J.P., a fancy woollen manufacturer of Royd Edge Mill. Hirst helped the co-operative cause by firstly calling together his foremen informing them that a meeting should be called of the whole work force. Following this initiative, a meeting was convened in Royd Edge Mill at which the society was duly established.[3] Hirst did not abandon his interest after the first committee assumed responsibility

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1. Established in 1851 and traded under name of George Eastwood and Company. Handbook of the 27th Co-operative Congress Huddersfield 1895, (Manchester, 1895), p 81.
2. Pages 95 and 96.
3. A. Haigh, History of the Meltham Industrial Co-operative Trading Society Ltd., 1861-1911, (Manchester, 1911), p 7.

for the direction of the society, he remained a very interested party to everything that developed and four years later is mentioned in the Co-operator as delivering "an excellent address - hearty sympathetic and full of encouragement to the co-operators to attempt the higher branches of the movement."[1] In Eccleshall, Sheffield, the workers employed by Chesterman and Company also had every encouragement from Mr. Chesterman, the owner, who also went beyond words and gave a loan of £100 to the infant society.[2]

A workforce able to purchase good quality commodities at fair prices, coupled with the opportunity of receiving a dividend on purchase and a safe repository for savings, could only do good for the manufacturer and the community in which that society operated. The provision of facilities for meetings, a strong speech in favour, a small loan were all that was needed in many cases, but other examples at Middlesbrough and Silkstone indicate that certain employers were prepared to go even further to promote co-operatives amongst their employees.

The iron masters, Fox and Head, and the coal owners, Pope and Pearson, stand out as two extreme examples of how far employers were prepared to go in this direction. Fox and Head were Quaker ironmasters in Middlesbrough. These proprietors of the Newport Rolling Mills were much concerned at the existing conflicts between capital and labour and sought within their concern to establish a partnership with their workforce. In return for giving up their trade union the workforce would receive a share in any profits made by the company. It was not surprising therefore that the iron masters should have given their support, in 1867, to the establishment of a retail co-operative society amongst their workers. Fox and Head both subscribed £5 to the new venture and also addressed the first meeting, at which they advocated

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1. The Co-operator, No.61, March 1865, p 156. Hirst attended a tea meeting to celebrate the progress of the society on February 11th, 1865.

2. W. Rose, A Brief History of the Society and Thirty Nine Years of Progress from 1874 - 1913, (Manchester, 1913), p 14.

the establishment of a store on the Rochdale model to be called the Newport Rolling Mills Co-operative Store Company Ltd. Members' contributions were stopped from their wages and this society made steady progress and eventually became the Middlesbrough Co-operative Society Ltd.

In Sharleston, Pope and Pearsons the local coal owners, were instrumental in establishing a co-operative society and store in their new village of Silkstone Row.[1] In this example the fortunes of the society were clearly in the hands of Pope and Pearson. The company, in 1872, proceeded to purchase the entire stock of William Carr, a grocer, amounting to nearly £475 plus an additional £50 for goodwill. Carr in turn, handed over his going concern to the mine company who then handed it over to the Sharleston Co-operative Industrial Society who would then have the responsibility of repaying the money outstanding to Pope and Pearson. All the first committee were Sharleston colliery men who immediately set about managing their co-operative which had been conveniently placed in their trust by the local coal owners. In both examples - Fox and Head and Pope and Pearson - the societies owed their existence to the positive actions of employers who realised the benefits that could accrue both to themselves and to their employees from this form of business and social activity.

Trade Unions

The mining industries of Yorkshire also give another example of the diverse origins of the Yorkshire Retail Co-operative Movement. On this occasion it was not the mine owners who were pioneering the formation of societies but the trade unions within the industry. This example introduces the trade unionists in Cleveland and north Yorkshire engaged in the iron stone mining industry, the Cleveland Miners' Association, known also as the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Miners' and Quarrymen's Association. One of the main aims of the union was to

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1. J. Goodchild, Coalmining at Sharleston - an historical essay, (Wakefield, 1976).

assist the intellectual, moral and social improvement of its members. In 1873, a year of good trade, on the initiative of the Association, no fewer than eight societies were established viz. Normanby, Guisboro, Skelton, Marske-by-the-Sea, Brotton, Loftus, Skinningrove and Hinderwell.[1] It is clear from reading the minutes of this union that they did play a very active and continuing role in spreading the principles of Co-operation amongst the iron stone workers of North Yorkshire.

> "It was unanimously decided to hold a demonstration, that it should be held at Loftus on Wednesday, July 3rd, and that the Agent should preside.
>
> The subjects which the delegates most particularly desired should be spoken on include Trade Unionism, Co-operation, Administrative Reform in Local Government, Nationalisation of Land and Minerals, Technical Education, and Federation of all workers."[2]

This trade union recognised the benefits that Co-operation could give to their members and took an active part in expounding this new philosophy. In an industry with regular fluctuations in trade, the ordinary mining family would obviously benefit from being associated with the local co-operative society. The good times would help to subsidise the bad times, and the power and influence of the union guaranteed that membership of the co-operatives would be high amongst the miners.

Trade unionists played a significant part in establishing many societies in Yorkshire. Individual members of trade unions, impressed by the benefits that had arisen by the collective actions of their new unions, could be valuable members of any grouping that was considering establishing a co-operative society. Another group of trade unionists

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1. Guisborough Exchange, dated 14th February 1873, records that "the supply of ironstone is better than it was and in some local mines double shift was being operated".
2. Council Meeting held in Primitive Methodist school-room Saltburn-by-the-Sea,March 27th, 1895. Records now deposited at the Education Department, General and Municipal Workers Union, Esher, Surrey.

who were, like the Ironstone Miners' Union, involved in establishing co-operative societies, were Railway workers. The Co-operator carries a letter from the North Eastern Railway Goods Department, Normanton: "We are forming a Co-operative Industrial Society here, and propose holding our first public meeting on Thursday evening (send 200 tracts) signed Sammuel Holliday".[1] At Doncaster the founders and supporters of the mutual and improvement society were employed at the "large works connected with the Great Northern Railway Company".[2] Similar origins can be found for societies at York and Wakefield, and other villages, towns and cities on the new rail network. The official journal of the Rail Union The Train deals with co-operative development in the U.K.

> "There are many co-operative stores mainly supported by railwaymen and with a little effort and organisation one could be established in each railway centre, and have affiliated to it outlying branches for smaller stations thus spreading the advantage to every employee".[3]

Railwaymen, by the very nature of their occupation, were a very mobile group of workers. When they moved to a new centre many would naturally seek to renew their membership of a co-operative society, and if a society did not exist in their new home then they had the experience of past membership to aid any aspiring co-operative group.

As indicated earlier there was in the middle years of the century some opposition to trade unions. Iron masters, Fox and Head, had introduced a profit sharing scheme amongst their employees in return for a pledge that workers would not belong to a trade union. In Sheffield there was, especially in the 1860's, considerable opposition voiced against trade unions. 1866 had witnessed the explosion of a tin of gunpowder at the home of a Sheffield non-unionist. This gave rise to condemnation of Union clubs, and this feeling was not merely

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1. No.242, March 1870, p 187 - A similar article also appears in the Penny Beehive, March 26th 1870, p 5.
2. The Co-operator, January 28th, 1871, p 60.
3. Dated January 16th, 1885. This article was published in Co-operative News, March 7th, 1885, p 199.

evident amongst employers and leading city dignitories. Following this action the Government appointed a Royal Commission to study the outrage as well as the whole trade union movement.

It is against this background that the Brightside and Carbrook (Sheffield) Co-operative Society was established in 1865. A hand written note from the originators of the society is very explicit about the prevailing problems as they saw them facing the people of England:

"I believe if Co-operation was carried out more fully it would be the means of raising the lower classes to an higher position in society if it was worked well it would do away with as many of the turnouts and strikes to which is a curse to England how many diabolical attempts at murder[1] there has been through trade unions, how many has there have been sent to prison. What poverty and misery it has caused how many hard working honest men have been compelled through fear of their lives been took to give up their work and by so doing their families have had to suffer privation and been obliged to run into debt who have never been able to redeem themselves or if they did it as took them months and years to adopt".[2]

This letter was unsigned, but it was written on the back of a memorandum from Wm. Jessop and Sons.[3] The first minute book of the Brightside society indicates that this note was connected with the young men's improvement class, some of the members of which were employed at Jessops.

This section on trade union influence has shown that whereas some trade unions greatly assisted in establishing co-operative societies, there are a number of instances where the birth of a society was a definite reaction against trade unions. The Co-operative Movement clearly attracted support from a wide cross section of opinion for a whole variety of different reasons. What was clear was that Co-operation was a concept that evoked a mainly favourable response from observers. The subject of co-operation could therefore be introduced in a variety

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1. This was one year before the tin of gunpowder incident.
2. This letter and first Minute Book are now deposited at Sheffield Central Library. The letter was dated October 11th 1865. Referred to as MD 6091.
3. A Steel Manufacturer.

of places and to a variety of different people. In Ripon a contributor to the Co-operator states that he was to read a conversational paper to the Ripon Trinity Church Young Men's Society on the "advantages of Co-operation".[1] Societies would not always develop as a result of such papers but they certainly did a great deal to publicise the Co-operative Movement.

Temperance Societies

The Temperance Movement was an important source of support for the new Co-operative Movement. Yorkshire was the main centre of this radical agitation and many leading temperance advocates were involved in co-operative experiments, indeed the histories of many societies chart the important role played by the 'Waterdrinkers'. Branches of the various temperance societies could be found in most towns and villages. At Castleford the origins of the local co-operative society sprang from a meeting of the Temperance Party. In a resume on the first year's progress of their society a co-operator states:

> "It is out ambition to educate and elevate ourselves and lift our Fellows up also, by saving cost of distribution doing away as far as possible with the credit system and the evil it entails by County Courts collecting the bad debts. This Sir, we opine will make more steady husbands and loving wives.
>
> For myself I know of no class of men more fit for the Elective Franchise than those members of Temperance Friendly and Co-operative Societies".[2]

This is but one example, amongst many, linking the Co-operative Movement with the large and influential Temperance Movement in Yorkshire. At Barnsley, Bingley, Heckmondwike and Castle Howard the seed of co-operation had been planted at Temperance meetings held in temperance hotels and inns. One society established in 1860 called themselves the Stocksbridge Band of Hope Co-operative Society. However, after closer

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1. The Co-operator, February 20th, 1869, p 24.
2. The hand written notes of the first years progress dated 1866 are now deposited at the Yorkshire Region CRS, Education Department, Huddersfield.

investigation it is evident that this society did not in fact have any connections with the temperance cause, but merely expressed in the title the hopes and aspirations a group of working men had for the future of their new undertaking.[1] Indeed, the first meeting of the society took place in the club room of George Batty's Inn.

The example of the Stocksbridge Band of Hope society again shows a diversity of origins. As the Temperance Movement helped to establish many societies, there were also many societies that owed their origins to meetings in public houses. Wakefield, Middlestown and Loftus all originated from such meetings. This should not surprise any observer; men for centuries have met in taverns, discussed common problems, advanced pet theories and at the same time enjoyed a pint of local beer. Co-operation was a very topical subject and would therefore have been considered by numerous groups of workers. Friendly and building societies often met in club rooms similar to George Batty's, and often the funds of their organisation would be expected to cater for an element of alcoholic refreshments. Drinking men and temperance advocates both contributed to establishing co-operative societies, for both groups could see the advantages of doing so.

Friendly Societies

The friendly societies of England were training grounds for many co-operators. The large affiliated orders, with their various benefits, had a strong following, especially in the industrial West Riding. In many respects they showed what was possible when people acted together. Men would learn the benefits of placing money aside each week, to be used when illness and injury struck. Men were in fact trained to look after their own affairs. Thus, confronted with a new organisation such as a co-operative society, it would not be difficult to perceive the potential of this movement. The success of the Friendly Society Movement had taught them what was possible, and many saw in a co-operative

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1. J. Kenworthy, Jubilee History of Stocksbridge Band of Hope Industrial Society, (Manchester, 1910), p 40.

society the benefits of an organisation that would embrace more than just an insurance principle. By regular shopping, a dividend would be generated which in turn could be converted into share capital and coupled with these economic advantages could be added democratic control and fellowship. The potential was evident to many men involved in friendly societies and this sector certainly was responsible for establishing many societies.

The names of some of the early co-operative societies show this unity of purpose, e.g. The Sheffield and Hallamshire Ancient Order of Foresters Co-operative Society and the Peaceful Dove Co-operative Trading Society.[1] The Huddersfield Industrial Co-operative Society established in 1860 owed its inception to members of Lodge 241 of the Bolton Unity Order of Oddfellows.[2] These close links between co-operative societies and friendly societies continued throughout the century and in 1890 the initial meeting of the Hull Co-operative Society was held in the Foresters Hall, the meeting being called at the instigation of Mr. Ballam Stead, secretary of the Ancient Order of Foresters, who was also Chairman of the Co-operative Union Propaganda Committee.[3] Co-operation was in many respects an extension of the friendly society function and dual membership of both bodies was a fairly common practice in nineteenth century Yorkshire.

Chartists

Whilst friendly and co-operative societies were experiencing great respectability and financial strength the Chartists' extensive influence as a mass movement ended after 1848. Many Chartists did however become associated with the new movement, such as men like David Green

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1. The Beehive, December 13th 1862, p 5. The Peaceful Dove Society was situated at Bingley.
2. Several friendly society lodges also assisted the new society with loans i.e. £40 from the Economy Lodge No.185 Bolton Unity of Oddfellows; £40 from Prosperity Lodge No. 208; £50 from Lodge No.241; £80 from the Ancient Order of the Golden Fleece. All loans were paid off by the year 1870. Balmforth, op.cit. p 37.
3. See Appendix 7-1 for a list of Harrogate society directors - many having strong friendly society connections.

of the Leeds Redemption Society who was later a leading member of the Leeds Industrial Co-operative Society. Two societies established before 1850 did in fact owe their existence to groups of Chartists operating in their particular localities, at Hebden Bridge and Halifax. The Hebden Bridge Chartists held regular meetings in their Chartist Room at Dulesgate on Sunday mornings. These Chartists were subscribing weekly to build up a common fund to enable them to go to America, there to buy land and live in community. This venture was termed the "American Society". The accumulation of funds was painfully slow and their regular weekly meetings would discuss a variety of topical subjects. At one of these Sunday meetings a past resident of Hebden Bridge spoke of his experiences at Bacup where he had been involved in the formation of a co-operative society on the Rochdale model.[1] This brief talk generated lively interest. James Mann was to become the first chairman of the Hebden Bridge society which was established in 1848. He was the only member of the American Society who did in fact emigrate to America. In Halifax a similar pattern emerged with regular meetings being held in the Chartist Meeting Room during 1850. This venture started on very humble lines in a cottage house in Back Foundry Street occupied by a weaver and became the Halifax Working Men's Co-operative and Provident Society. The Chartists went into rapid decline following 1848, but many individual members would in the next couple of decades associate themselves with the new Co-operative Movement which, if not satisfying their immediate political objectives, did point the way to what was possible. The respectable Co-operative Movement played a significant part in showing the leaders of society that working men could be given the vote and could be relied upon to act in a responsible fashion.

HELP FROM OTHER CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

Chapter Three showed how the Rochdale society was prepared to assist in the formation of societies. This help extended to Yorkshire where the Leeds, York, Todmorden and Keighley societies were given

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1. This man was a Thomas Mitchell. The society in Bacup being established in 1846. N.H. Gregory, A Century's Progress: a hundred years of Co-operation in Hebden Bridge, (Todmorden,1948), pp 4-5.

very early advice which considerably helped in the early difficult years.[1] This guidance and promotional work was also carried out by the established societies within Yorkshire itself. A common way that led to the establishment of many societies appeared in an advertisement in the Halifax Guardian dated March 9th, 1861.[2]

"Mytholmroyd Co-operation

On Tuesday evening last, in the Oddfellows Hall, Mytholmroyd, a well attended meeting was addressed by Messrs. H. Hollinrake and E. Hitchen of Hebden Bridge on the above subject. The meeting appeared unanimously of the opinion that Co-operation was a great good to the working classes, but various opinions were expressed as to whether it would be most prudent to form an independent society or to be a branch of another society already established. A committee and other officers were elected and the subject was taken up with great spirit, upwards of 70 giving their names as shareholders, Mr. James Greenwood, of Wall Top House, presided on the occasion - Advt."

The Hebden Bridge co-operators, like many established societies, seem to have been keen to advance the co-operative cause, and it is possible that their motive could have been the establishment of one of their branch stores in the village of Mytholmroyd. In this example the villagers of Mytholmroyd decided to take control of their own society and not become a branch of this larger society. It was also not uncommon for a group of enthusiasts to come together, not in order to establish their own society, but to develop into a pressure group that would try to secure, for local supporters, a branch of an established society in their locality. This pattern was followed by the neighbouring society of Stainland which was established a couple of months before Mytholmroyd.[3] Stainland at their second meeting decided "That a deputation wait upon Halifax and Huddersfield in order to ascertain upon what terms they would open a branch shop and state the same to the

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1. And many more besides
2. Page 5.
3. Committee Minutes, Stainland and Holywell Green Society, February 18th, 1861.

committee". However, Stainland obviously could not come to an amicable arrangement with either of their larger neighbours and embarked on a course of independent development. At Bradley on September 17th, 1875 a meeting was held at the White Cross Inn.[1] A vote was taken on whether to join Huddersfield or Brighouse; 46 people favoured joining Huddersfield and 28 voted to join Brighouse. The Queensbury society placed on record 'that they would be pleased to open a branch in any village which would gather 50 members "with a promise of £1 each".[2] There was in Yorkshire however a very strong desire to remain independent of larger neighbouring societies, a desire to run their own society for the benefit of their community, a yearning for local control and autonomy which is still evident in many societies over one hundred years later.

THE ROLE OF THE FEDERAL ORGANISATIONS

As the century progressed the role that Rochdale had readily accepted in the early years of disseminating co-operative information, was taken over by the Co-operative Union and the Co-operative Wholesale Society.[3] By 1880 the vast majority of societies had been established and most towns and cities in the county of Yorkshire had a co-operative store in their midst. In the West Riding you could include most villages as having a co-operative presence and in the Huddersfield area there were literally dozens of co-operative societies.[4] However, there were co-operative deserts and this is where the Co-operative Union and the Co-operative Wholesale Society concentrated their efforts. At Hull we have already seen that the retail co-operative society owed a great deal to the help and guidance of Ballam Stead a leading Forester, who was more importantly Chairman of the Co-operative Union Propaganda

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1. According to a report in the Co-operative News, September 25th, 1875, p 502.
2. Bradford Co-operative Congress Souvenir 1911, (Manchester,1911) p 180.
3. In England. Scotland had its own Wholesale - S.C.W.S.
4. The spread (geographical) of societies will be covered in Chapter Five.

Committee. The first minute book entry for this society indicates that a representative from the Co-operative Union "explained the object for which the meeting had been called".[1] In this example the society did not just get expert advice from the Co-operative Union but they also received from the C.W.S. an advance of £250 to help them on their way. At Harrogate in 1887 the pioneers of the society delegated one of their number to obtain information from the Central Board of the Co-operative Union. In response the Union sent pamphlets explaining the Movement together with copies of the rules of other societies. Help in the form of useful information from the Co-operative Union and limited financial help from the C.W.S. played a significant part in bringing co-operation to the eastern parts of the county during the last decades of the century.[2]

GREAT VARIETY OF ORIGINS

This chapter has indicated the variety of institutions and circumstances in which, nevertheless, there was a lot of common social and moral ground. The more societies examined the larger becomes the list of participants. In York there was a strong secularist element; in Sheffield Roman Catholic Priests involved themselves in retailing;[3] in Scarborough during the 1860's a group associated with a local savings bank formed a co-operative; in Heckmondwike[4] surplus money following a tea party held in connection with the Birstall Joint Stock Clothing Company was passed on to the founders of the local co-operative; the Golcar Flour and Provisions Company registered as a co-operative in 1883 to avoid paying income tax; Christian Spiritualists were active in the Keighley society where the founders also met regularly in the Turkish baths of the town; Rosalind, Countess of Carlisle, played a significant part in establishing the Castle Howard society.[5] A pattern

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1. Dated April 14th 1890.

2. Wooldale and Malton and Norton record in their Histories the help they received from the Co-operative Union. Anon. Jubilee Souvenir of Wooldale Industrial and Equitable Co-operative Society, 1886-1936, (Holmfirth, 1936), pp 13 and 15. G. Plumber and J. Walker, Jubilee Souvenir History of the Malton and Norton Co-operative Society, 1901-1951 (1951), p 2.

3. Established circa 1860 and probably called the St. Vincents' society. The Co-operator, No. 199, May 22nd, 1869, p 327.

4. This fact is given in the first minute book. Anon. A Brief Historical Sketch, 1860-1930: Heckmondwike and District Co-operative Society Ltd. (Heckmondwike, 1930), pp 1 and 2.

5. She offered society rent free property for 7 years. Anon. Fifty Years of Progress: Castle Howard and District Co-operative Society Ltd. (1946), no page numbers recorded.

Rosalind Carlisle

ROSALIND, COUNTESS OF CARLISLE

emerges of disparate groups, many of whom were not drawn by ideological reasons. In fact it is evident that economic factors played an important role in the origins of many retail societies. This economic consideration is typified in the example of the Wakefield Industrial Co-operative Society which was established in 1867. Prison officers at Wakefield Prison noted that the Prison Accountant, Mr. W.J. Robinson, purchased large amounts of food for the prison, at wholesale prices. They tackled Robinson about the possibility of prison officers being allowed to buy at similar low rates. The accountant was not able to accommodate the officers in this fashion, but did suggest a co-operative society might be the answer. This scheme was then backed by the Prison Governor, Captain Godfrey Armytage, and other senior prison officials. At a subsequent meeting held in the Mechanics Institute Mr. Robinson proposed the establishment of a co-operative society and this was seconded by the clerk and steward of Wakefield Asylum, Mr. George Appleyard. Immediately this meeting ended certain individuals in attendance decided that they objected to the predominance of Prison Officers in this new society and proceeded to establish their own society which became known as the Wakefield Borough Co-operative Society.

The establishment of co-operative societies even extended into the party political sphere. It was quite common in Lancashire for societies to be formed exclusively for the benefit of members of either political party. Even Rochdale had a competitor in the form of the Rochdale Conservative Co-operative Society. Just as free hold land societies were associated with political parties so also were certain co-operative societies. At Golcar, near Huddersfield, there were two separate co-operative societies - the Golcar Friendly and the Central Working Men's. The Liberals were the force behind the Golcar Friendly and the Tories were in control of the Central Working Mens. Even today some old timers refer to them as the yellow and blue co-operatives.

The bulk purchase of certain essential commodities such as flour had been practised by working people for centuries. Economic factors alone spurred many to organise their affairs in a more disciplined fashion. Many such groups would, during the period under study, place their spontaneous associations on a more permanent footing and register

as co-operative societies.[1] Rochdale had shown what was possible and many groups would now utilize the Lancashire experience to shape their own co-operative society to meet their local requirements.

This chapter has surveyed the great variety of origins within the Yorkshire Retail Co-operative Movement. Disparate groups moulded their co-operative to suit their particular circumstances. The development of other agencies showed the immense potential if one was prepared to collaborate for the common good, and so assisted the Co-operative Movement at a time in which the general living standards of many sections of the community were improving. Co-operation clearly meant many things to many people and the Rochdale model should not blind us into assuming that societies established after 1844 sprang from the same origins. Local conditions, local customs, local divisions, are all important considerations when analysing the origins of societies, societies that by their very structure were autonomous and separate bodies. Local control and direction are characteristics that will become even clearer in the following chapter.

In many ways this chapter also shows why the pre 1844 co-operatives failed to attract the support of a sizeable proportion of the population. Those early ventures were heavily dependent on the initiative and drive of key members who were in various ways constrained by their personal commitments to their particular societies, which being new businesses required constant vigilence and regular monitoring. There were no support organisations, the early congresses being an exception to the rule, which would have allowed for the pooling of resources and experiences. By contrast after 1844, the appropriate support structure in the form of the Rochdale Pioneers, the Christian Socialists and the pioneers of the Co-operative Union was in place and helped to bring the scattered societies into a network of support organisations that had advisory rather than compulsory powers. The men of Thomas Hirst's

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1. The Honley society originated from the purchase of cheese needed by workmen celebrating Christmas. The profit made by this action encouraged them to establish a permanent organisation. Handbook of the 27th Annual Co-operative Congress, Huddersfield,1895, (Manchester, 1895), pp 90-92.

generation, although dedicated to the cause, took decisions in isolated ignorance and were never able to formulate a scheme of development that attracted the support of most sections of society.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PRACTICAL RESULTS OF CO-OPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT

This chapter will consider the tangible results of co-operative development, in a century which experienced fundamental changes in retailing and the retailing environment. Rising disposible incomes, urbanisation, population growth, the transport revolution, favourable fiscal policies interacted with the growth in scale of production. However, perhaps the most important fact is that co-operative growth was faster than growth of income per capita. No doubt growth of income and population were important stimuli. But the faster growth points to the distinctiveness of the co-operative achievement. Co-operative societies were at the forefront of the economic and social changes. They were run by very practical men, prepared to take a new look at the consumer and to assess his changing needs.

By 1900 Yorkshire societies alone could record the following impressive string of statistics - 192 independent societies; 324,906 individual members; £4½m. share capital; £225,913 loan capital; £158,768 reserves; £1,795,148 of fixed assets; £2m investments; £526,000 in bank; £9,183,585 sales per annum. Co-operative growth would have allowed for resources to be converted into collective capital for development, but lack of ideas and appropriate organisation prevented this course of action being followed. This chapter shows a strand of Yorkshire independence, almost parochialism, which always overode utopian schemes based on idealism. Indeed the overwhelming demand for higher dividends not only prevented the Movement from entering the areas of activity favoured by the followers of Owen but may have excluded many poorer members of the community from sharing in the benefits of co-operation at all. Striving for immediate economic benefits was a strong feature of co-operative development in the nineteenth century and had far reaching consequences for the twentieth century.[1] This chapter will show an impressive record of progress but many would view the period for its complete abandonment of original aims and aspirations.

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1. This point will be considered in the final chapter of this thesis.

RETAIL CHANGE

In the nineteenth century industrial development gathered momentum and radically altered the face of Britain, but the retail trade continued in its traditional ways. Until at least halfway through the century the size of shops, the kind of people who ran them and their methods of buying and selling were very much as they had been a hundred years before. Shops were still almost invariably small, owned and run by the shopkeeper on the spot. Shopping in this period differed very much between regions and between localities. In cities and big towns shops in some streets still only catered for the upper and growing middle classes. Working class customers were relegated to the backdoor. The working classes had shops to go to but they were very few, meagrely stocked and struggling to counter balance bad debts by high prices. Indeed financing large volumes of credit probably acted as a brake to the more rapid introduction of new retailing techniques. The working class housewife in general terms would purchase fish, fruit and vegetables from the market and street traders and her bread,bacon, meat, cheese and groceries from the shopkeepers.[1] Greengrocers, fishmongers and butchers retailing exclusively in shops catered to a higher class of trade. However, between the 1820's and 1850's there was an enormous growth of shops and much of this growth was dominated by the small general shop which tended to be operated by men and women of a similar social background to the urban poor. In many respects the general neighbourhood shop acted as a socialising institution by breaking down the prejudices and educating the recently urbanised consumers in the techniques and style of shop trading.

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1. Fairs operated usefully in predominantly rural areas characterised by slow communications and transport. Unlike the fair however, retail markets were successfully adapted as exchange institutions to urban conditions. Markets, although their relative importance declined, were able to adapt to changed circumstances and indeed many developed into wholesale markets for surrounding towns.

Population growth cannot be ignored in any analysis of retail change. Population changes would entail drastic changes in the nation's food supplies. The population of England and Wales increased from 9 million in 1800 to 18 million in 1850 and by 1900 the number of mouths to feed had risen by over 32 million. In Yorkshire the growth rates, especially in the West Riding matched and in many cases exceeded the national averages.

Yorkshire Population Figures (thousands)

	1801	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
Yorkshire (East Riding)	111	219	238	265	309	342	385
Yorkshire (North Riding)	158	213	242	290	341	360	377
Yorkshire (West Riding)	591	1,366	1,553	1,882	2,237	2,507	2,843

Source: B.R. Mitchell & Phyllis Deane, Abstract of British Historical Statistics, (Cambridge, 1971), p20 and p 22).

The rate of increase in total numbers in England was always above 10% per decade in the nineteenth century and it reached 14.4% in the period 1871-81. In the West Riding of Yorkshire there was an even greater increase of 21.2% in the period 1861-71 and 18.86% increase between 1871-81. Population growth did bring forth a greater absolute demand for distribution services, but added to this was the concentration of people in urban areas where subsistence activities declined in importance, and the shift of the labour force out of occupations with a self-sufficiency content. These massive social changes provided new opportunities for distributors, but also demanded the development of new skills. Urban growth was an integral part of the economic transformation of the nation which had been proceeding swiftly since the initial decades of the Industrial Revolution in the late eighteenth century. The numbers living in urban areas of England and Wales in the nineteenth century rose from under 2½ million to over 25 million.
In Yorkshire, Middlesbrough grew from a village of 6,000 in 1841 to 91,000 by 1901, an increase of over 1,400%. Likewise, Huddersfield

expanded from 7,000 people in 1801 to 95,000 in 1901.[1]

Whatever the distribution of the population, the greater the efficiency of transport services the greater will be the volume of demand brought within reach of producers. The most decisive aspect of the transport revolution was the development of railways in the 1830's and 1840's.[2] All retailers were affected by the resulting speeding up of goods transport and communications between producer and consumer. Cheaper ocean shipping also resulted in the availability of bulk supplies of cheap, imported food stuffs, a development assisted by the official commitment to free trade in food. Transport improvements of this kind certainly opened up entrepreneurial opportunities in the distribution system. A new or improved road, rail or canal link would extend the sales market of a retailer, offering new opportunity for expansion and also bringing him into competition with larger and more efficient concerns. The retailer's range of wholesale supplies could be extended, thus reducing the dependence on local concerns. Confidence in the regularity and speed of goods transport would result in higher stock turnover, and a wider range of services for consumers, operating at lower costs.

The growth of per capita income was undoubtedly a major stimulus to retail change. Treble is convinced that between 1830-1914, for the bulk of the working classes the quality of urban life underwent a series of modest, but cumulatively significant improvements.[3] Utilising the findings of G.H. Wood, he shows that among those who did not change their job a rise of fifty per cent in real wages was recorded between 1850-54 and 1900-2. This was regarded as a minimum figure for, taking into account the shift in the occupational structure which took place from less to more skilled employment, the average worker experienced a gain of eighty per cent. This marked improvement however should not

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1. An increase of 1,257%.
2. Chapter 6 shows how important transport improvements were in the Calderdale village of Mytholmroyd.
3. J.H. Treble, Urban Poverty in Britain 1830-1914, (Cambridge, 1979), p 185.

disguise the fact that widespread poverty continued to exist in urban society and as late as 1900 one in five in England and Wales could expect a pauper's funeral.[1]

These fundamental changes taking place within the economy, created an environment conducive to retailing growth. However, without the necessary entrepreneurial input these favourable conditions could not have been exploited. Lipton was a retailer who displayed a genuinely creative insight into the preferences of consumers. His business started in Glasgow in 1871 and expanded rapidly. By 1880 he had four branches in Glasgow and his spectacular move south of the border came with the opening of the Leeds branch in 1881. The multiple approach has been well recorded by Fraser:

> "Costs were kept down by eliminating deliveries and orders, by keeping book-keeping to a minimum thanks to the refusal of credit and by making shop fittings fairly simple. Most effective of all however, was the limitation of the range offered to a few selected items which could be obtained cheaply by bulk purchase. More and more the shopkeeper's customers were social strangers and to attract them into the shop, competitive skills shifted from those based on inter-personal relationships to those based on generalized service and price competitiveness".[2]

The opportunities available for entering the expanding market are no better shown than in the case of one of the founders of the Marks and Spencer empire - Michael Marks. It was possible in the mid 1880's for this refugee from the pogroms of Tsarist Russia to begin his retailing career in Yorkshire. Starting as a packman in the isolated villages of the West Riding, he quickly moved to a stall at the Tuesday and Saturday market in Kirkgate in Leeds, then to the Castleford and Wakefield markets on the other days of the week.

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1. Rowntree's considered judgement was that between twenty-five and thirty per cent of urban dwellers subsisted in either primary or secondary poverty.

2. W. Hamish Fraser, The Coming of the Mass Market 1850-1914, (1981), p 113.

NORTHOWRAM BRANCH OF THE HALIFAX SOCIETY, OPENED FEBRUARY 1860

The participation of the Rochdale Pioneers in this retailing revolution was important. In organisational terms these exceptional men had introduced, more or less by accident, two brilliant new ideas which had nothing to do with the ideals of Co-operation, namely vertical integration and the branch system. The expansion of retailing outlets helping to stimulate demand, but to satisfy that demand output had to be increased. In many cases this involved a process of vertical integration with retail societies gaining control of their supplies. In these two instances the development of multiple branch organisation, and the large-scale integration made possible by the wholesale societies, the Co-operative Movement was the first in the field with modern methods of distribution. This was not because it was run by businessmen, rather the reverse. It was because it was run by people, who, for reasons which had nothing to do with business, were prepared to take a completely fresh look at the consumer, assess his changing needs and take bold and if necessary unconventional steps to meet them. Working men needed good food, good value, shops conveniently situated, and well stocked and in addition a place where their surplus funds could be deposited and readily available if needed. Late Victorian prosperity for working people meant first and foremost, eating more food; plain basic groceries such as flour, tea and sugar and perishable provisions like bacon, butter, cheese and eggs which could now be obtained cheaply from abroad. Only the co-operatives, being progressive, sold all these under one roof.

CO-OPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The advance made in the final decades of the nineteenth century has already been briefly indicated. Following the development of the Movement in terms of membership, number of societies, sales, share capital, reserves, etc., necessitates a numerical approach because the very success of the Movement was founded and expressed in such practical terms. In addition, most of the statistical returns are divided into the seven Co-operative Union districts that were established in Yorkshire. There was a network of district conferences

and meetings, and societies often were more interested in what was going on in co-operative district circles than in what the private multiple retailers were doing. This co-operative indifference or unawareness of actual or potential competition is still evident in the 1980's and will be covered in greater detail in the final chapter.

MEMBERSHIP

Between 1878 and 1900 individual co-operative membership in Yorkshire increased from approximately 100,000 to 325,000. Individual members would be required to hold at least one £1 share and membership in the majority of cases[1] was open to both men and women, and joint membership was perfectly acceptable.[2] The membership figures show that unlike the pre-Rochdale Movement, co-operatives were now attracting a sizeable percentage of the adult population of Yorkshire. In small villages it was common that: "nearly every inhabitant of the village has had or has some relative connected with the local co-op".[3] In large towns the penetration figures although not as high were still very impressive indicating the widespread support for the Movement in the urban parts of the county.

The membership figures for each of the seven Co-operative Union districts are shown in Appendix 5-1. Growth was evident in all districts, with the most marked increases taking place in the North Riding, East Riding and South Yorkshire districts - areas that generally developed later than the West Riding districts. Districts were being increasingly dominated by the presence of large societies with membership figures exceeding 10,000. By 1900 the Leeds society could proudly boast a membership of 48,000,which made it the largest co-operative society in the world.[4]

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1. The Berry Brow society was probably not the only society that stated in their rules that "no female who has a husband shall be admitted". Rules deposited at Yorkshire Region CRS, Huddersfield.

2. i.e. in the names of both partners in marriage, or, two male members sharing membership, or double female membership.

3. Bradford Congress Souvenir, 1911, p 165, referring to the Eccleshall Co-operative Industrial Society Ltd.

4. The Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers had 12,764 members in 1900. Congress Report, 1901.

The size distributions of societies is shown in Table One and graphically represented in Table Two. In 1870 72.5% of societies had below 500 members and these societies accounted for approximately 30% of all co-operators in Yorkshire. No society was able to record a membership of over 10,000. By 1885 69.1% of societies had below 500 members but they now accounted for 16.4% of co-operators. By the turn of the century 54.2% of societies were still below 500 members but this group now only accounted for 8.0% of the total membership. By contrast there were now seven societies Bradford Provident, Leeds Industrial, Halifax Industrial, Huddersfield Industrial, Barnsley British, Brightside and Carbrook (Sheffield) and Middlesbrough with 10,000 members and above, and they alone accounted for 41.3% of Yorkshire co-operators. It is therefore clear that although the typical society in nineteenth century Yorkshire had below 500 members, there was an ever increasing percentage of members in the larger societies.

The Mytholmroyd society near Halifax was one of the smaller-type societies that were so common in nineteenth century Yorkshire and their share ledgers record the composition of membership for the years 1861, 1876 and 1909. Co-operative societies like Mytholmroyd were male dominated in their early years of development, but as the century progressed an ever increasing number of women came into membership. In 1861, 86% of members of the Mytholmroyd co-operative were male but by 1909 this figure had fallen to 70% as shown in Table Three. The membership returns for the Huddersfield Industrial Society for the years 1889-1897 show, that from a sample of 730 new members 403 were in fact women, this being 55% of new members.[1] Women certainly played an insignificant part in the actual formation of societies, but their position as active consumers would bring them into contact with the local society more than their husbands who would be at work during the majority of shop opening hours. This analysis shows that the early male domination was changing and that by 1900 the majority of new members could in fact have been women. The growth of the Co-operative Women's Guild in the 1880's and 1890's did indicate that women in the

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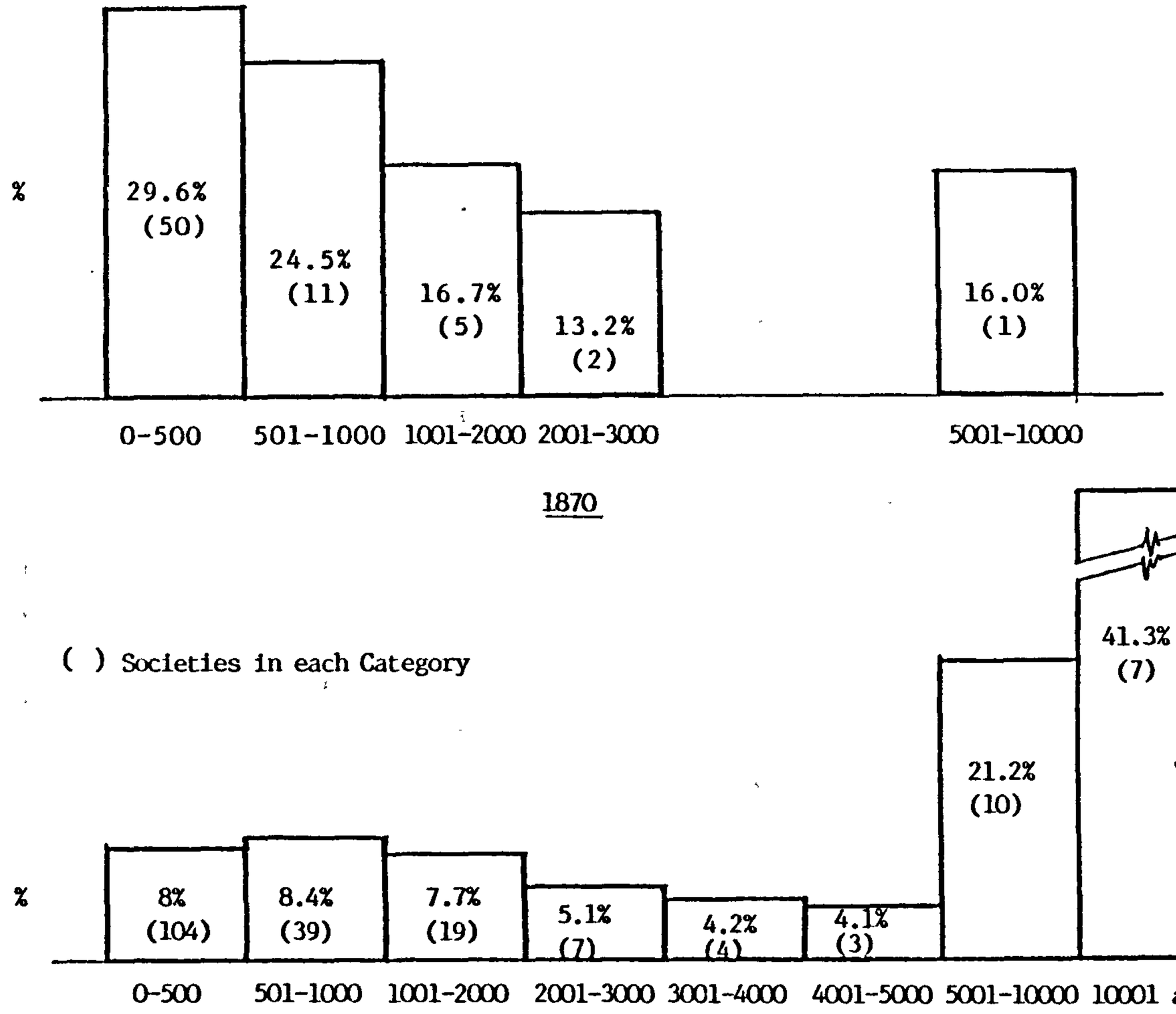
1. See Appendix 5-2 for full breakdown.

TABLE ONE SIZE DISTRIBUTION OF YORKSHIRE RETAIL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

Year	Membership	North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks	Total	% of Societies in each group	% of membership in each group
1870	0 - 500	0	17	13	10	0	5	4	50	72.5%	29.6%
	501 - 1000	0	3	2	3	1	1	1	11	16.0%	24.5%
	1001 - 2000	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	5	7.2%	16.7%
	2001 - 3000	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	2.9%	13.2%
	3001 - 4000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	4001 - 5000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5001 - 10000	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.4%	16.0%
	10001 and above	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1885	0 - 500	7	33	16	18	7	33	7	121	69.1%	16.4%
	501 - 1000	2	3	4	7	0	5	2	23	13.1%	9.2%
	1001 - 2000	0	1	1	4	0	2	2	10	5.7%	8.0%
	2001 - 3000	0	2	2	2	0	0	1	7	4.0%	10.2%
	3001 - 4000	1	1	0	2	0	0	1	5	2.9%	10.1%
	4001 - 5000	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	1.2%	5.6%
	5001 - 10000	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	6	3.4%	26.3%
	10001 and above	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.6%	14.2%
1900	0 - 500	7	32	16	12	8	26	2	104	54.2%	8.0%
	501 - 1000	1	7	5	8	4	13	2	39	20.3%	8.4%
	1001 - 2000	3	4	2	4	2	1	2	19	8.4%	7.7%
	2001 - 3000	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	3.6%	5.1%
	3001 - 4000	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	4	2.1%	4.2%
	4001 - 5000	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	3	1.6%	4.1%
	5001 - 10000	0	2	1	4	1	1	2	10	5.7%	21.2%
	10001 and above	1	2	1	0	0	0	2	7	3.6%	41.3%

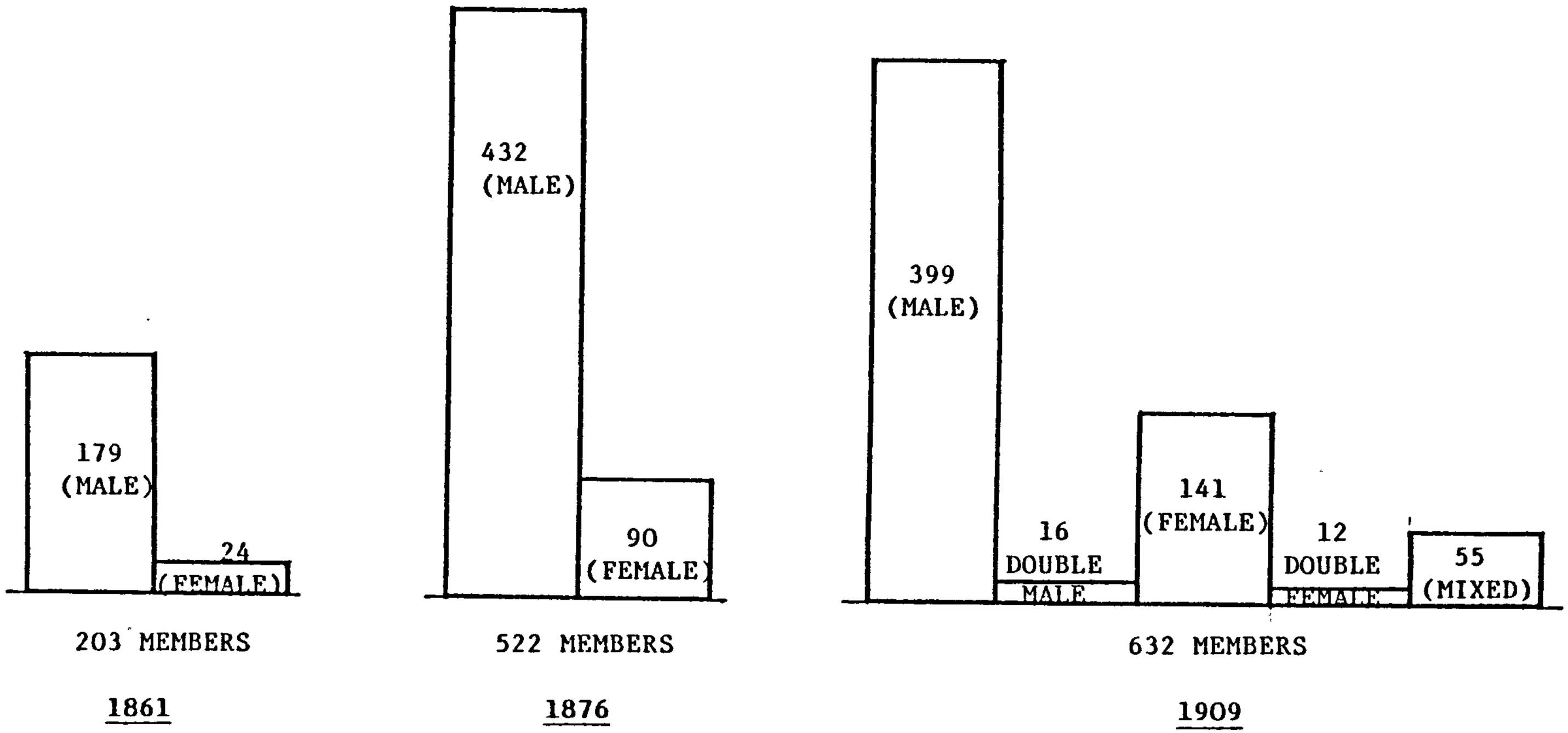
Source: Annual Congress Reports

TABLE TWO SIZE DISTRIBUTION OF YORKSHIRE RETAIL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES - % OF MEMBERSHIP IN EACH SIZE CATEGORY



Source: Annual Congress Reports

TABLE THREE MYTHOLMROYD CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY - MEMBERSHIP DISTRIBUTION BY SEX 1861-1909



Source: Share Ledger 1861-76 and 1909-26

large towns and cities of Yorkshire were beginning to emancipate themselves from traditionally held views and their purchasing power could be used to reinforce this position.[1]

NUMERICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIETIES

In numerical terms the nineteenth century saw the establishment of nearly four hundred co-operative societies in the county of Yorkshire.[2] The growth in the number of societies established is shown below:

Societies Established

Period	Numbers Established
Pre 1844	49
1844-49	5
1850-59	45
1860-69	130
1870-79	86
1880-89	32
1890-99	34 [3]

The 1860's and 1870's witnessed exceptional growth. Figure One sets out to record the dates of establishment of societies together with important acts of parliament relating to co-operative societies. Exact correlations are not immediately apparent; however, if one allows more than a calendar year for expectations leading to action and for lagged

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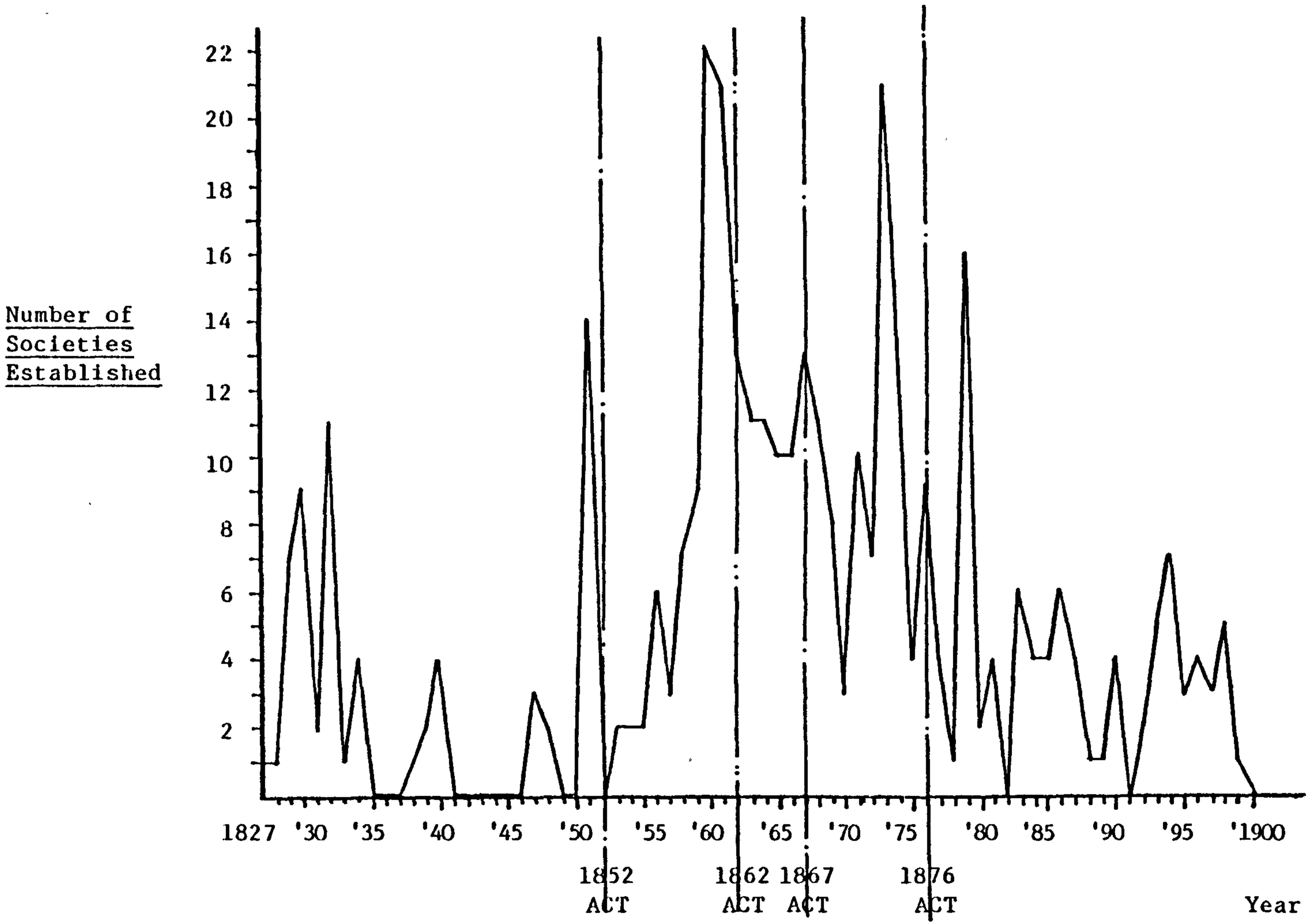
1. More information on Guild will be given towards the end of this chapter.

2. 381 societies have been located, the dates of establishment of 7 are unknown.

3. By 1900 there were 192 societies operating in Yorkshire. Thus just over one third of societies established had ceased to operate by the end of the century - the vast majority having merged with a large neighbouring society or in fact not even starting to trade after registering. Very few failed.

FIGURE ONE DATES OF ESTABLISHMENT AND ACTS OF PARLIAMENT RELATING TO YORKSHIRE RETAIL SOCIETIES



Source: Congress Returns

responses then a link does exist between favourable legislation and the number of societies established. However the concentration of population in towns and cities is probably easier to show as a feature of this period which stimulated co-operative growth, especially the big urban co-operatives.

The geographical spread of societies is shown in Sheets One to Five. Sheet One shows the location of societies established before 1844, the majority of which were to be found within a ten mile radius of Huddersfield. Sheet Two covering the period 1844-59 indicates further development having taken place in the Huddersfield area and along the banks of the rivers Aire and Calder. The two decades of phenomenal growth in new societies, the 1860's and 1870's are shown in Sheet Three and indicate progress not just being confined to the West Riding but touching South Yorkshire.[1] Sheet Four shows further growth and consolidation in the period 1880-1900. As indicated, the main areas of co-operative development were to be found in the industrial rather than the rural areas of the county.[2] Ninety per cent of all societies could be found in the area from Harrogate southwards and from York westwards, with the majority of outer societies being located in the ironstone mining areas of Cleveland. Agricultural areas did not share in the rapid development of Co-operative societies. The Co-operative Union and the C.W.S. were entrusted with the duty of bringing Co-operation to the market towns of the North and East Riding for without their help and encouragement very little progress would have been made in these areas. The number of societies in each district is shown in Appendix 5-3 and the pattern recorded in Sheets One to Five is repeated. Fewer societies existed in the North Riding, East Riding and South Yorkshire when compared to the large number of societies in the Airedale, Calderdale, Dewsbury and Huddersfield districts. The vast majority of societies in Yorkshire had been established by 1884. In the period 1884 to 1900 the number of societies only increased from 173 to 192.

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1. Growth was also evident in the Cleveland area.
2. Sheet Five shows the consolidated growth for period 1827-1900. Sheets one to five are situated on inside back cover.

GREENSIDE BRANCH (Grocery).

GREENSIDE BRANCH OF THE HUDDERSFIELD SOCIETY

Societies were not immortal, but their life-span was greater than joint-stock companies and by the end of the nineteenth century the composite co-operative organisation had become exceedingly stable.[1]

The impressive progress made by Yorkshire retail societies was recorded by J. Ludlow and E.O. Greening on separate visits made to the county in 1851 and 1882. Ludlow found flourishing stores at Todmorden, Sowerby Bridge, Skipton, Keighley, Bingley, Bradford and Middlesbrough. The calibre of co-operators in the City of Leeds greatly impressed Ludlow.[2] Men like John Holmes, Dr. Lees, David Green, Mr. Eggleston:

> "... are men of whom one ought to be sufficient in an ordinary sized town to create a Co-operative Movement and to meet them together seems a priceless piece of good fortune".

However, with such obvious talent Ludlow felt that more could and should have been achieved in Leeds:

> "... the feeling comes on one that there has been a waste here, of moral power all but inexplicable; that the flourishing business of the cornmill, that the distant farm of the Redemption Society and the few members whom it employs at Leeds, are to say the least, scarcely adequate witnesses to the truth of Co-operation as a practical social engine compared with the talent and the energy with which its theory has been set forth".[3]

The points made by Ludlow concerning Leeds are significant and testify in many respects to the perceived impression held by radicals in Leeds that the co-operatives, although useful vehicles for social advance, would not significantly alter the lot of the ordinary worker

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1. Even today, the Co-operative Development Agency has been able to establish that new and emerging co-operatives have a greater chance of success than a newly established private concern. C.D.A. Annual Report and Accounts 1985, p 6.
2. The Co-operator, Saturday, November 29th, 1851, pp 340-41 "Notes of a Co-operative Tour Through Lancashire and Yorkshire".
3. The Co-operator, Saturday, December 5th, 1851, p 357.

and fell well short of creating a system that could supersede capitalism.[1] Ludlow was none the less impressed with what he had seen in Yorkshire. Although due to a train delay the co-operative traveller was not able to visit Sheffield it was clear that he was rather anxious that progress seemed slow in such a large city.

Greening visited Huddersfield in 1882 and was fascinated by the large number of independent societies trading in this one Northern town. He was initially interested in finding out why Yorkshire co-operators were loath to vote a proportion of their profits to educational provision but the multitude of societies distracted him from his original plan. Greening walked and drove round to see the branch stores of the Huddersfield Industrial Society and

> "... came everywhere across these independent and separate little stores. Some were to be seen right opposite the branch stores of the big society. Others, within a stone's throw, in the same street. At Paddock Wood, besides a branch of the Huddersfield Society there are two independent stores, the Paddock Wood Friendly Society with 180 members and the Paddock (Hill Top) Working Men's Society with 165 members".[2]

Greening and his companion Ramsden Balmforth noted three independent societies in Almondbury - the Town End, Perseverance and the Integrity; at Milnsbridge besides a branch of the Huddersfield society was the Milnsbridge Perseverance Society with 383 members; separate societies were to be found at Close Hill, Crosland Moor, Hill House, Lane Dyehouse, Netherton, Berry Brow, Sheepridge and Westgate in the centre of the town. All the above societies existed independently of the Huddersfield society which operated a central store at Buxton Road and sixteen branch shops scattered throughout the town and neighbourhood.

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1. Leeds being a major centre for radical thought and expression.
2. Co-operative News, April 8th, 1882, p 218.

PRESENT CENTRAL PREMISES, 20-30, RAILWAY STREET, AND 19-21, TANNER ROW.

CENTRAL PREMISES YORK CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

The co-operative observer was obviously surprised at the proliferation of societies and one reason given to him for this state of affairs was that many were seceders from the large Huddersfield Industrial Society:

> "Storekeepers, being offended at the determination of the committee to reduce the leakage[1] went off and started separate societies, carrying bodies of members with them".[2]

There did seem a strong desire by people in the area to"have a little society all to themselves".[3] Greening recognised that this might give the co-operators concerned an element of independence and control but felt that perhaps a veto would be "placed upon doing anything more in common that they have found by actual experience to be very advantageous".[4] This striving for independence together with a utilitarian approach could then lead to voting down proposals for expenditure on education and other more social activities.

Co-operative development depended, like so many other things, on local circumstances and conditions. There were small "one shop" rural societies; one shop societies in the industrial towns with a large membership; societies like Barnsley British, centred on a large town, which serviced a large proportion of the Yorkshire coalfield; there were also societies like Leeds catering for the great centres of population and providing a variety of services throughout the city and suburbs with a large central premise and numerous branches but not extending much beyond the city boundary. Evidently the communal soil of coal-pits or textile mill was more favourable to development and growth than the scattered little workshops and tenement factories in places like Sheffield. The rapid development of societies in Yorkshire soon resulted in most towns and villages in the West Riding having

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1. Pilfering
2. Co-operative News, April 8th, 1882, p 218.
3. Co-operative News, April 8th, 1882, p 218.
4. Co-operative News, April 8th, 1882, p 218.

their own individual society or at least a branch of a large society. As the century progressed overlapping was gradually eliminated by local agreement or by the efforts of the Co-operative Union, and by the early 1880's the co-operative map established was to remain almost unchanged until the inter-war period when a degree of rationalisation took place. A central feature of this development process was the wish by many to establish their own individual society that would be geared to satisfying their own personal requirements. Parochialism had established a firm grip on most societies and wider considerations would be expected to take a secondary role.

SALES

Co-operative societies were the "Common Provider"[1] supplying the everyday requirements of the family, from hats down to clogs, from bacon reared in the society's trading area to American meats and cheese, from blankets manufactured locally to jams from a C.W.S. factory. The range of goods and other household goods meant that societies could and did offer their members almost anything they wanted, and if it was not in stock then it could be made available within days. With co-operative societies there was no specialisation as was the case with certain multiple stores (e.g. selling only a limited range of food products) operating over an area without clearly defined boundaries. A retail society was brought into being to supply goods and services demanded by their members.

Co-operative trade, in the same way as membership, was increasing throughout the last decades of the century as shown in Appendix 5-4. Between 1878 and 1900 sales increased from £3,128,159 to £9,190,781 or nearly 200%. Large societies dominated the picture with the 10 largest achieving just over half the Yorkshire Movement's sales by 1900.[2] This therefore meant that the remaining 182 societies

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1. The term "Universal Provider" was also in common use.

2. The ten largest being - Leeds, Barnsley British, Bradford, Halifax, Huddersfield, Brightside and Carbrook (Sheffield), Brighouse, Dewsbury, Middlesbrough and Heckmondwike. Congress Report, 1901.

accounted for just under 50% of sales. Leeds had passed the £1m annual sales mark in 1887 and by 1900 this figure stood at £1,473,702.

The majority of societies did allow non-members to purchase from stores, and it was also customary for societies to allow these non-members a dividend at half the rate paid to full members. Generally, ordinary members would not complain about this practice because additional trade would duly increase profits and therefore the dividends of members. Given that sales were just over £9m in 1900 and membership stood at 325,000 an average sales figure per member per year of just over £28 was achieved. However, as indicated above, the purchases of non-members does complicate the average figure. In Mytholmroyd it appears that non-members purchases accounted for approximately 10% of sales. This pattern was probably repeated in many other societies throughout Yorkshire. The benefits obtained from membership e.g. a full rate of dividend, would act as a spur to most shoppers and thus the percentage of non-members would have been small. It is clear that the figure of sales per member meant that with workers earning approximately £50 per year a sizeable proportion of their weekly wage was spent in the co-operative store. Members would be expected to buy all their provisions from the society and would only purchase elsewhere if it was not available at the store. Great hostility would be generated if anyone, especially a committeeman, was found to have patronised another shop. A number of societies entered into their rules a purchasing qualification and at Leeds a member would be required to spend "... at least eight pounds per annum".[1] The findings above show that unlike the pre-Rochdale Movement the benefits of co-operative trade were now being shared by hundreds of thousands of Yorkshire people. By 1900 the population of Yorkshire had reached 3,605,000 and the sales per capita figures for co-operative retail societies had reached £2.55 and if isolated to include inhabitants of the West Riding only this figure increases to £2.95 per capita.[2] In terms of sales the Yorkshire Movement was now reaching and sustaining a sizeable proportion of Yorkshire folk.

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1. Rules and Regulations, registered 14th January, 1897, Rule 13, p 6.
2. 1881 = £1.23 per capita; 1891 = £1.92 per capita.

One departure from the Rochdale model concerned the sale of alcoholic beverages. In many cases societies, being the "common provider", sold goods that their members requested and these included beer and spirits. The Altofts Co-operative Society accounts show that between 15% and 20% of all sales came from beers and spirits.[1] One shocked visitor found in 1875

> "... a five-pull beer tap at the top corner of the shop, rows of small bottles of Allsop's or Bass's and, still more unusual, rows of spirits, pint and quart bottles of gin, rum, whisky, etc."[2]

If societies had a sizeable temperance lobby then it was not the practice to sell such items and instead the shops could be closed on Band of Hope Gala days or property would not be acquired if there was a beer licence on the premises. The Movement in general did not favour selling beers and spirits but individual societies would do so if pressed by members. Sufficient local demand was generally all that was required to secure a deviation from the national moral stance. One of the main suppliers to societies was the C.W.S. By 1900 at least 40% of all goods purchased by societies came from the C.W.S. or other co-operative sources. This figure would have been a lot higher if the Leeds society had supported co-operative suppliers in a more meaningful way. Leeds on average purchased 10% of their requirements from co-operative sources whereas small societies like Holmfirth could record that "... the society's purchases from co-operative sources during the past half year are 86½% of the total purchases."[3] It is clear that larger societies with their ability to purchase in bulk at more favourable terms, did not need to rely on the C.W.S. in the same way as did the smaller society. Although loyal to the wholesale society for a high percentage of goods, the need to purchase at competitive prices was more important to most societies, and committees would face stern questioning at members' meetings if the dividend had slipped as a result of purchasing supplies at unfavourable terms. This point is shown in the Hull society General Committee minutes:

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1. For the period 10th December 1873 to September 7th 1891.
2. Co-operative News, February 13th, 1875, p 79.
3. Co-operative News, February 1st, 1890, p 19.

> "Resolved that the Manager be instructed to purchase all goods locally when they can be obtained at a cheaper rate than from the wholesale society. The carriage of goods being a very serious item which must be added to prime costs".[1]

Goods sold by societies were expected to be of the highest quality and thus this policy did adhere to the Rochdale principles. Committees would at their weekly meeting be confronted with a list of goods to be ordered and most minute books record the fact that lists were duly approved and that the secretary and other cheque signatories be authorised to sign cheques, etc. Most remaining minuted information concerning purchases dealt with the quality of goods sold and the high standards expected. The functions undertaken by committees were very important in terms of business efficiency. Their role was not just to rubber stamp the actions of the manager but to participate actively in the retailing strategy of societies. Although not professionally qualified in the technical aspects of retailing, they were nevertheless a panel of active consumers who would, through personal contact with family, friends and workmates and public scrutiny at members meetings, be expected to give members the range of services required at the right price which in return would safeguard the future well being of the society. Private business relied on salaried staff to undertake this responsibility. By contrast, the co-operative sector had unwittingly pioneered a direct form of market research and quality control.

There was a general acceptance amongst the public that co-operative societies did seek to offer goods of a high quality and if any society did transgress then magistrates like Dr. Carr of Dewsbury petty sessions were on hand to protect the general public. Dr. Carr presided over a case involving the manager of a branch store of the Heckmondwike society accused of selling adulterated lard. The magistrate remarked

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1. Minutes of General Committee, 7th July 1880, (No item number recorded).

"I think that these co-operative shops put themselves on a different footing to the ordinary shops. The Co-operative system is rather loud in its profession of selling goods in a state of perfect purity, and from that point of view I consider the penalty ought to be greater upon them. I do think that in connection with Co-operative Societies when a case is clearly brought home against them, and especially of such a large adulteration that the public ought to be protected by the enforcement of the penalties of the Act".[1]

The Heckmondwike society were fined 40 shillings and had to pay costs. This isolated case was an embarrassment for in general trading practices adopted by co-operative societies were superior to their competitors and this fact was recognised by the various enquiries held during the century. The Leeds society sent their secretary Mr. Emmerson (see photograph) to London in 1856 to give evidence before a committee of the House of Commons on adulteration in human food and the proceedings show that his evidence was well received and impressed the committee.

Holyoake showed that even adoption of a policy of only selling pure unadulterated products could cause the Leeds society certain unexpected problems.[2] Apparently an episode in the history of the society, aptly named "White Flour Trouble", caused much heart searching amongst the directors. Some members "craved" white flour, having been reared on bread containing alum, but not knowing it to be injurious to health. The Leeds directors would not contemplate adding alum nor using an inferior sort of wheat which produced very white flour, but was low in nutritious value. The society resolved not to compromise their principles and continued to sell the very high quality flour even if it was not pure white. Sales increased and the society felt that honesty paid dividends in the long run. Value for money, good quality produce, a responsive management, coupled with a dividend payment helped to turn many consumers to the co-operative store and away from the private retailers.

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1. Co-operative News, Saturday, 29th March, 1879, p 205.
2. G.J. Holyoake, Leeds Industrial Co-operative Society Ltd. 1847-1897, (Manchester, 1897), p 58.

WILLIAM EMERSON, SECRETARY OF LEEDS SOCIETY

1847 and 1856-1858

SHARE CAPITAL

Share capital increased from £1,203,931 in 1878 to £4,562,232 in 1900, an increase of 280%. In 1878 the average shareholding per member was £11.68 and by the close of the century this stood at £14.04. This increase was partly as a result of the improved incomes of the working classes, as noted earlier in the chapter, and partly as a mark of confidence in co-operative societies for investing purposes. The growth in capital funds (see Appendix 5.5) was continuous irrespective of boom and slump in the national economy.[1] Loan capital was less significant than share capital and in the years under review increased from £61,825 to £225,913 or 264%.[2]

One of the most important aspects relating to share capital to emerge in the second half of the nineteenth century concerned the fact that societies had capital funds beyond their internal needs. To remedy this embarrassing situation societies could take several different courses of action, e.g. a maximum investment per member below the £200 permitted by law or rates of interest could be decreased on investments above a set figure or sometimes the rate of interest was set at a lower figure if a member's purchases were low. At Ossett the secretary reported to his Board of Directors that the capital belonging to the non-purchasing members amounted to nearly £900 of which about £400 belonged to friendly societies in the town. The Ossett members resolved:

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1. No person can become a member of an Industrial and Provident Society without accepting the liability to contribute to the share capital. The value of a share may be anything from one penny upward. What the value of each share be is determined by the rule as also is the minimum number of shares for which a member accepts liability.

2. Societies may raise capital in the form of loans. The rules generally give societies power to accept advances of money from any person, whether a member of the society or not, upon the security of bonds, or of a mortgage either legal or equitable of any of the society's property.

> "... that in all cases where members brought in less than £5 worth of checks they be regarded as non-purchasing members, and the rate of interest on their capital be reduced from 5 to 3½%".[1]

Societies were aware that there were within their midst different categories of co-operative members e.g. those who shopped and invested, those who shopped but had little invested in share capital; those who did little shopping but invested up to the maximum.[2] If societies had up to date purchasing and share registers then they could act in whatever way they felt most appropriate.

What is evident is that there was an uneven distribution of share capital holdings within societies. The Loftus society in Cleveland through the pages of their journal the Wheatsheaf[3] shows the following distribution of share capital:

Numbers of Members	Shareholding Category	Total
7	Over £30	£ 222.13.1
45	£30	£1,350. 0.0
64	£20 to £30	£1,584. 7.0
142	£10 to £20	£1,930. 6.7
130	£ 5 to £10	£ 914. 8.4
317	£ 1 to £ 5	£ 811.15.2
332	£ 1	£ 332. 0.0
170	1s to £1	£ 66. 2.10
79	1s	£ 3.19.0
4	Under 1s	£ 0. 2.6

Thus in Loftus 1,290 members had a total capital holding of £7,215.14.6. One hundred and sixteen members (those with £20 and above invested in

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1. Co-operative News, January 11th, 1893, p 17.
2. This issue is considered in greater detail in Chapter Six.
3. The Wheatsheaf, October 1898, p 11.

society) owned £3,157.0.1 of the capital, representing 44% of the total.

The Sheffield society share ledger for June 1878 records that £8,690.4.9 share capital was in the hands of 642 members. However, a closer view shows that 43 members (those with over £50 invested) accounted for 41% of the share capital. The exact relationship would have varied from society to society, but the pattern shown above was probably very close to the true picture.[1] Any set of individual figures would reflect a host of varying local conditions and circumstances e.g. a slump in trade could result in members withdrawing capital and likewise a high proportion of investors in the top categories could reflect the absence, in local communities, of suitable outlets for surplus funds.

It is a fact that a reliance upon share and loan capital resulted in the requirement to maintain a high liquidity of assets at short notice.[2] This policy coupled with the distribution to members of the vast majority of surplus made, discouraged societies from investing in building and equipment in developing their own businesses.[3] Societies preferred to have capital surplus to their own business enterprise and to invest it elsewhere. Societies certainly had the resources available for the development, but there was a lack of ideas or will to change the direction in which the Movement was going. Having established a successful formula they did not want to depart from this method of operation.

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1. A recent survey (1981) carried out by Co-operative Retail Services Ltd. indicated a similar pattern for the 1980's. C.R.S. Internal survey - Shropshire Region.
2. Some societies did place restrictions on withdrawing capital especially if there were adverse local conditions e.g. trade depression, strike, etc.
3. Pages 194-198 consider aspects relating to the distribution of surplus.

INVESTMENTS

The above experience is nowhere better shown than in the field of investment policy. The way Yorkshire men invested their surplus money tells us a lot about the way they viewed their co-operative and the wider society in which they lived:

> "There is between £20,000 and £30,000 lying at the bank at 2½% interest, for which the society pays nearly double, and amongst the suggestions thrown out at the meeting was one that sums should be lent on mortgage deeds at a rate of interest the minimum of which should be 4%, and that the committee in the meantime look out for other desirable investments, in the form of railway and bank shares, etc."[1]

Investments made by Yorkshire societies rose from £331,855 in 1882 to £2,010,645 in 1900. The exact breakdown in the composition of these totals is only available from 1895 when the Co-operative Union returns divided investments into three categories, (a) investments in other co-operative societies, (b) investments in house property, (c) other investments.[2] Figure Two shows that by 1900 £677,140 was invested in other co-operative societies, £1,062,880 in house property and £270,624 in other investments.

By 1900 one third of co-operative investments were with other co-operative organisations such as the C.W.S. and co-operative producer societies. Although societies were not in the main prepared to enter into manufacturing on their own account they generally invested in producer societies and in return would often gain representation on the respective society's board, if locally based. The wholesale society was developing quickly in the manufacturing field and therefore investments from member societies would be welcome. It must be recognised that societies were selling large quantities of goods made by other co-operative organisations and therefore had a vested interest in ensuring

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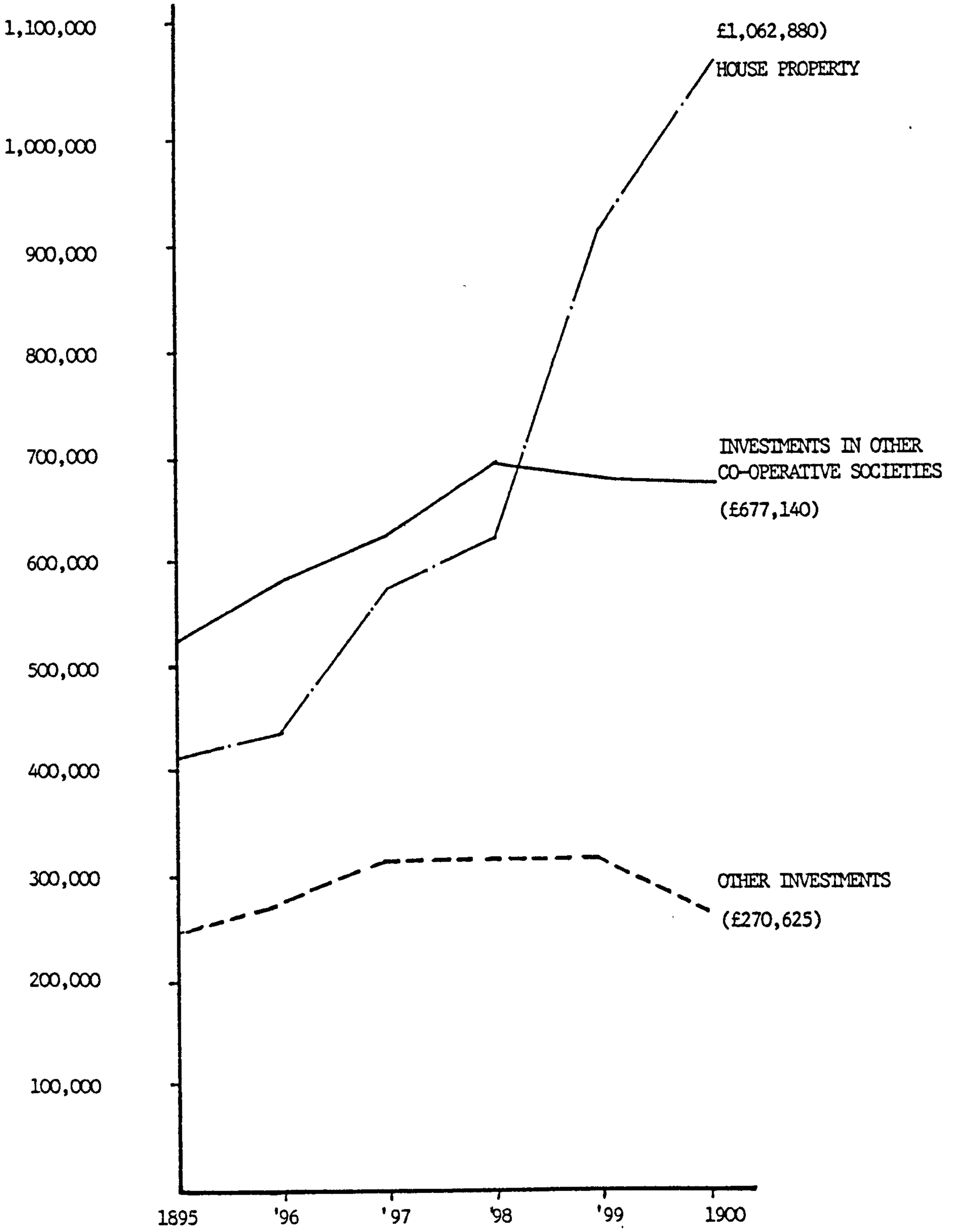
1. Co-operative News, April 14th 1883, p 359 - Report on 125th Quarterly meeting of the Heckmondwike Co-operative Society.
2. Government stocks, railway shares, private companies (mainly local) and a common investment in the Manchester Ship Canal.

FIGURE TWO YORKSHIRE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES - INVESTMENTS 1895-1900



Source: Co-operative Congress Returns 1896-1901
No detailed breakdown, as above, are included in earlier returns.

the success of that form of enterprise plus the vertical integration, aspects mentioned earlier in this chapter highlighted the importance of gaining control over supplies.

However, two-thirds of investments went outside the Movement. House property was the main category of investments, representing 52% of all investments by the turn of the century:

> "... so satisfied are the committee with this truly co-operative method of employing its surplus funds, that they have secured five or six acres of freehold land, with a view to further develop this department of work and help to solve the vexed question of the housing of the working classes ... You may see whole terraces of houses where the tenant-owners vie with one another as to who can make their homes most comfortable, and I think this is being brought about through a feeling of proprietorship
>
> Yours &c W.H. Childe"[1]

This practice was certainly a departure from earlier co-operative thinking about common ownership, as indicated in Chapter Four. But the worthy cause of house ownership as expounded by W.H. Childe and many others, had a strong and pervasive hold over many co-operators and was regarded as a stepping stone in the continuing advancement of the working man. An investment in house property could be seen as bringing immediate practical benefits to members. In contrast, a scheme designed to employ co-operators in a productive concern would be much more difficult to justify to a membership in fairly regular employment and rather sceptical about the wisdom or indeed the need, for such a venture in the first place, especially by their own retail society.

The third category of investments generally involved government stocks, railway shares and local mills engaged in the textile industry. The local co-operative society was an important institution in the local community and problems involving any of the local concerns would

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1. This letter dated 7th August 1899 appeared in the Co-operative News, September 2nd, 1899, p 973.

BRANCH PREMISES OF BARNSLEY BRITISH SOCIETY

ALSO SHOWING TWO ADJOINING COTTAGE PROPERTIES

have a direct bearing on the society. Meltham Industrial, Sowerby Bridge and Heckmondwike societies were not alone in investing large sums of money in local private concerns. In 1873 the Heckmondwike society took up shares to the value of £12,000[1] in the Heckmondwike Manufacturing Company, and in 1899 a further £5,520 was invested in Messrs. J. Tattersall and Sons. It was recognised that if this firm was allowed to close it would seriously affect trade. Unfortunately for the society this second injection of capital only delayed the eventual close down and resulted in £3,633 being "written off from profits and Reserve Fund".[2] In a similar fashion the Sowerby Bridge society was involved in the granting of a loan of £1,500 to the Cragg Cotton Company but little information is available as to whether this turned out to be a sound investment of just a prop for an ailing local concern. One area of investment policy that did receive support from societies was the Manchester Ship Canal Company for which: "there was genuine popular enthusiasm".[3] However this was regarded as an act of faith in a bold plan rather than an attempt to make financial gain.

The most alarming example of co-operative investment policy involved the Halifax society. This early established society with its origins proudly going back to the Chartists was involved in a long series of disastrous investments. By 1864 the Halifax board of directors recognised that there was a surplus of capital and they took the view that this surplus should be invested to the best advantage of their members. Their first line of action was to enter cotton manufacturing but this venture lost money consistently and the concern closed down in 1869, the final loss to the society being £6,000. On the 20th February 1869 a resolution was passed by the Board that had far reaching consequences for the society

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1. 2,400 shares at £5 each. Anon. A Brief Historical Sketch, 1860-1930: Heckmondwike and District Co-operative Society Ltd., p 9.
2. Same source as footnote 1, p 5.
3. J.H. Clapham, An Economic History of Modern Britain, Vol.3, (Cambridge, 1968), p 366.

> "... that it be left in the hands of the directors to invest our surplus capital in John Crossley and Sons Limited, Messrs. Briggs and Co.; Whitwood Colliery or any other company the Board may think fit!"[1]

and on November 24th it was resolved:

> "... that Mr. Storey be appointed to go to London tomorrow to make enquiry about a stock and share broker, and to get some information as to foreign stocks".[2]

The committee comprising a foreman, overlooker, stuff finisher, carpet weaver, gardener, mill overlooker, woolsorter and painter were about to enter uncharted waters. The minute books of the society[3] show that in 1871 large sums of money were expended on Honduras bonds (£3,000), London, Chatham and Dover Preference stock(£6,000), 1869 Turkish Bonds (£5,000). In one month alone the society purchased £40,000 worth of stock. A £5,000 profit was realised by selling when stocks increased, however this situation did not last and the Co-operative News[4] showed, as did later auditors reports that the stock retained by them was "almost unremunerative" and the market value was well below nominal value:

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1. M. Blatchford, The History of the Halifax Industrial Society Ltd., (Halifax, 1901), p 102.
2. M. Blatchford, The History of the Halifax Industrial Society Ltd., (Halifax, 1901), p 106.
3. None have survived but Blatchford obviously relied heavily upon them.
4. Saturday, October 28th, 1876, p 564.

	Nominal Value	Market Value
North of England Iron & Coal Co.Ltd.	14,000 0 0	14,000 0 0
North of England Preference	2,800 6 0	2,800 0 0
Productive Society	700 0 0	700 0 0
Newspaper Society Ltd.	20 0 0	20 0 0
Atlantic 1st Mortgage Bonds	16,458 15 0	4,400 0 0
Atlantic 2nd Mortgage Bonds	2,851 17 6	320 0 0
Atlantic 3rd Mortgage Bonds	2,791 11 3	560 0 0
Great Western of Canada	6,959 17 6	2,713 10 0
Manston Coal Co.Ltd.	5,230 0 0	5,230 0 0
Erie Railway Co.Ltd.	18,625 12 6	3,060 0 0
Erie 2nd Mortgage	2,288 3 2	960 0 0
Leeds & Yorkshire Coal Co.	400 0 0	400 0 0
	72,396 17 4	35,439 10 0

There was a good deal of adverse publicity and many members withdrew their share capital. By 1891 it was estimated that these dealings had cost the society £101,500. This publicity probably discouraged others from following the same course of action, but once again showed the problems that surplus capital generated amongst nineteenth century co-operative societies.

EMPLOYEES

The number of employees within the Retail Co-operative Movement in Yorkshire is shown in Appendix 5-6. The first recorded information is for the year 1895 when 5,521 employees are listed - 3,995 engaged in distributive occupations[1] and 1,526 engaged in productive[2] departments. By 1900 the co-operative workforce had increased to 9,025.[3]

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1. Selling goods over the counter and other support staff.
2. Those engaged in milling, clogging, bakery, drapery departments etc. - producing goods that would be sold in the shops.
3. 6,232 distributive and 2,793 productive. Appendix 5-6.

Very little information is available concerning the treatment received by co-operative employees. However, there are strong grounds for believing that a position with the co-operative was highly sought after and that many workers would spend their entire working lives with the co-operative.[1]

It was the Co-operative Movement that introduced the weekly half day holiday for their employees and co-operative staff were encouraged to learn a trade and thus become more efficient, a level of efficiency that would obviously benefit their members and also the general economic well being of the society. Hours were long but this was a characteristic common to all retailers. By 1900 the average hours worked by retail co-operative employees were as follows:

	Distributive	Productive
North Riding	51.29	49.50
Airedale	55.44	54.77
Calderdale	55.30	55.48
Dewsbury	55.75	54.80
East Yorks	56.77	52.75
Huddersfield	55.21	54.75
South Yorks	53.83	55.21

Long and loyal service, better pay and conditions, training and working for a successful organisation, these factors worked to the advantage of the Movement in the nineteenth century. Although not radically altering the relationships between employees and employers co-operative societies led other retailers in industrial relations matters. By treating employees well they established a standard that other employers were later to follow.[2]

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1. A letter of resignation from the Manager of the Mytholmroyd society, Mr. Charles Helliwell, is recorded in chapter 7, pp 239-241. This letter gives an excellent example of long service.

2. Aspects relating to the treatment of staff are reviewed in greater detail in the final chapter.

DISTRIBUTION OF SURPLUS

The growth in the wider economy mentioned earlier in the chapter gave a tremendous boost to the retail trade in the second half of the nineteenth century and the co-operatives with their efficient distributive network reaped considerable rewards. The net profits achieved by Yorkshire societies in 1878, as shown in Appendix 5-7 reached £302,570 or 9.67% of sales.[1] Profits passed the £1 million mark in 1896 and by the close of the century stood at £1,483,000 or 16.13%. All societies, big and small, increased their profitability figures during this period and this was undoubtedly a result of improved methods and a more professional approach. According to Bonner:

> "... practical businessmen, trained and experienced in private trade, attracted to the movement by salary and security were perhaps apt to apply the standards of private business to co-operative business."[2]

The success of private multiple concerns and the co-operatives was at the expense of the small independent retailers who by the very nature of their undertaking were not able to take full advantage of modern retailing methods. The door was open for co-operatives to achieve high profit levels and that was certainly the policy pursued by the majority of societies.

A clear recognition that societies did pursue the above policies can be shown in the following report of a meeting held in Luddenfoot in 1871.

> "It is a well-known fact that the system of paying large and fabulous dividends by distributive co-operative stores has been a considerable embarrassment to the extension of co-operation and the members of the various stores will do well to observe that a 3 shilling in the £ bonus has first of all to come from their own pockets

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1. In today's highly competitive retailing environment this figure is less than 2%.
2. A. Bonner, British Co-operation, (Manchester, 1961), p 101.

> in having to pay extra price for goods; and whilst they have been crying out "give more bonus" the private shopkeeper has found it very agreeable to increase the already exorbitant price of his goods and add a little more bonus to his private purse".[1]

Although no detailed investigation was undertaken on this issue in the nineteenth century, a survey[2] carried out in February 1932 showed that co-operative societies in the northern half of the country tended to dominate the price level, and outside prices[3] were fixed at a level in most cases a fraction below the level of co-operative prices. Slightly higher prices did not pay for the whole of the dividend but it is highly probable that some part of the dividend was accounted for in this way.

What is clear when dealing with dividends is that the rate in the £ increased considerably in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. This change is shown below:

1878

3.5% of societies paid less than 1 shilling dividend
32.5% of societies paid between 1 shilling and 2 shillings
57.5% of societies paid between 2 shillings and 3 shillings
6.5% of societies paid between 3 shillings and 4 shillings

1900

0.5% of societies paid less than 1 shilling dividend
9.0% of societies paid between 1 shilling and 2 shillings
35.0% of societies paid between 2 shillings and 3 shillings
48.5% of societies paid between 3 shillings and 4 shillings
5.5% of societies paid between 4 shillings and 5 shillings
1.5% of societies paid over 5 shillings

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1. Co-operative News, December 16th 1871, pp 172-173.
2. "Comparison of Co-operative Prices and Prices in other Businesses" a survey carried out in February 1932 and mentioned in - J.A.Hough, Dividend on Co-operative Purchases, (Manchester, 1936), p 112.
3. Prices charged by private retailing concerns.

Thus by 1900 nearly half the societies in Yorkshire were paying out between 3 shillings and 4 shillings in the £. There was a real and overt desire to pay high dividends and this also spread to a number of non-co-operative ventures. In the Hebden Bridge area non-co-operative trading organisations called Economic Stores were established and benefited as a result of this desire amongst people for large dividends. A dividend of 3 shillings in the £ was given, a shopper did not have to become a member and was not required to hold share capital.

It is not difficult to see why people adapted easily to this form of retailing which has been described by Johnson[1] as 'forced saving'. Slightly higher prices and bigger shopping bills were more than compensated for by the appeal of a large cash return at the end of the trading period. To benefit fully would encourage the member to maximise purchases and this was certainly made easier by the availability of quality produce conveniently located under one roof and closely supervised by their peers. The dividend payment would, in the main, be expended on items beyond the normal weekly budgets of most people and this intrinsic appeal alone would have deterred societies from adopting any other policy, once established as a normal practice.[2]

One negative aspect of a high dividend policy concerned the plight of the lower paid workers. This section of the community might as a result of higher co-operative prices be forced to find other retailing outlets that offered lower prices and credit provision.[3] This dilemma was recognised by many co-operators. Sidney Webb acknowledged

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1. P. Johnson, Saving and Spending - The Working Class Economy in Britain, 1870-1939, (Oxford, 1985), p 140.
2. Sales in the non-food departments coincided with 'divi' payment days. The Mytholmroyd data, Chapter Six, reinforces this point in terms of the dividend being used as a form of discount.
3. Poorer quality goods also feature in this category, e.g. goods might be similar in price but lower in quality in small private concerns.

> "... the sad fact that those among the wage earners who need the advantages of co-operation least have got it the most and those who need it most avail themselves of it least".[1]

It was the Womens' Guild who expended most energy in trying to change the Movement's attitude towards the poor. At the Cardiff Congress of 1900 representatives of the Guild advocated establishing branch stores in districts where the poor reside.[2] One delegate, Mrs. Bury from Darwen stated

> "... most co-operators were "well to do" but we want to get down to the "skim milk". High dividends were an obstacle to this necessary extension of the store system ... it was no use to pay money over the counter with one hand and take it back with the other ... the best goods should be supplied at the slum stores ... and they must be served in the small quantities required. High dividends necessitated inflated prices".

This resolution was passed unanimously and although the guild actively pursued the scheme by helping to establish stores in poor areas no lasting success was achieved.[3]

The very practical results of co-operative development have been recorded above; immediate benefits were demanded and it must be remembered when considering any working class dominated organisation, that until well after 1900, the majority of working people in Britain as elsewhere, were concerned above all with the struggle for existence. Although very moral in tone the following quotation from Mr. T. Swann of Masbro' shows the viewpoint shared by the majority of those who were responsible for guiding societies in the nineteenth century.

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1. Lincoln Congress Report, 1891, p 15.
2. Cardiff Congress Report, 1900, pp 167-168.
3. The Sunderland experiment being the most publicised. C. Webb, Industrial Co-operation (Manchester, 1912), p 220.

"Every human being is fit to be a co-operator, on one condition - that he has the cash. Co-operators are against giving credit, and that was a difficulty with the poorest of the poor, who, having no cash would have to be approached by special methods. He thought that a large proportion of the "submerged tenth" might raise themselves if they only tried. There were many co-operators who had raised themselves from the lowest depths. It was the poor in the slums who supported the gin palaces. The people need educating and showing that they have the power to raise themselves, then co-operators will give them a helping hand. Co-operation cannot raise people without their own help".[1]

A strong economic base had been created which would allow the Movement to determine its own development path. The 'building blocks' were in place but the will to proceed in a radical direction did not exist in any meaningful fashion. It might seem that a cash nexus philosophy reigned supreme, yet there were still strong Owenite and Chartist influences at work. This influence is shown in more detail in Chapter Seven.

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1. Congress Report, 1891, p 16. Mr. Swan was responding to the comments made by Sidney Webb.

CHAPTER SIX

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MYTHOLMROYD

The availability of a rich source of original research material has enabled a separate study to be undertaken on a society established in the Calderdale village of Mytholmroyd in 1861. Careful use of a share and purchasing ledger and census returns have shown that this village co-operative society penetrated every section of the community. A person's social standing did not militate against his sharing the benefits of a co-operative membership. The Mytholmroyd data shows that the unskilled members were often, in relative percentage terms, eclipsing the skilled workers who have traditionally been regarded as the most loyal co-operators. Another significant finding is that when looking at dividend and share interest payments the vast majority of members from all social classes, withdrew bonus payments. Thus in Mytholmroyd dividend was not a form of saving but a universal system of discount.

THE VILLAGE OF MYTHOLMROYD

Defoe, in his tour through Great Britain, made in 1724-26, writing of Halifax says:

> "We found the country one continuous village, though everywhere montainous, hardly a house out of speaking distance from another. We could see at every house a tenter, and on almost every tenter a piece of cloth, kersey, or shallon".[1]

To anyone who knows the district it is clear that Defoe was writing of the parish and not the town only, and his description fits well with what is known about the village of Mytholmroyd.[2] Mytholmroyd is in fact an old settlement on the floor of the Calder Valley and is situated in the four townships of Erringden, Midgley, Sowerby and Wadsworth. In relation to other towns in the vicinity, it is six miles west of Halifax, 6 miles east of Todmorden and a little over a dozen miles from Rochdale.

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1. D. Defoe, Tour through Great Britain 1727, vol.11 (1927 edn) p 604.
2. Valley bottom 300 feet above sea level, rising to over 1,200 feet on both sides of the valley.

From very early days the people of the area had been engaged in weaving, and many a house and cottage had its hand loom. The district was, therefore, well prepared to take part in the rapid changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution. The first great change took place in 1794 when the Rochdale Canal Act was passed, and opened up the valley to the passage of heavy merchandise between Lancashire and Yorkshire (see photograph).[1] The Mytholmroyd Bridge Turnpike Road Act of 1815 was passed to improve communications still further and the passing of the Manchester and Leeds Railways Act in 1836 brought still better transport facilities to the village.

In the meantime, the character of the village as an agricultural district was rapidly changing. Under various enclosure awards the moors were partially enclosed, and new farms carved out of what had formerly been waste land. Indeed, according to Hanson, some of the higher farms like Stannery End, harvested crops where today it would be impossible to make such farming pay.[2] Even in 1861, the year when the society was established, there were still many men and women engaged in hand loom weaving, and numerous men were employed in combing wool. The manufacture of woollen cards by hand continued for some years afterwards, but so far as cotton goods were concerned these primitive methods gave way more quickly to water and steam driven machinery.

However, the future prosperity of the village lay in the mills that were soon to dominate the Calder Valley. The principal mills were: - Westfield (worsted spinning); Hawksclough Mill (spinning and weaving cotton); Grange Mill then known as Fielden Mill (cotton spinning); Clough Bottom Mill (worsted weaving); White Lee Mill (cotton weaving); Greenhill Mill (blanket and flannel manufacturing) and Bull-Coits (cotton weaving).[3] The village was well endowed in terms of factory employment and also a good selection of shops and other

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1. Transport changes being very important in the development of this village.
2. The Story of Old Halifax, (1920), p 207.
3. This information comes from the Jubilee History of Mytholmroyd Co-operative Society, (Mytholmroyd, 1911), p 4.

A VILLAGE SCENE - MYTHOLMROYD

CANAL IN FOREGROUND, CO-OPERATIVE STORE TO THE LEFT OF BRIDGE, PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHAPEL IS THE LARGEST BUILDING TO THE RIGHT

services that were so vital to the everyday life of the inhabitants of Mytholmroyd.

Very little is known concerning the origins of the society, but, as far as can be judged, the desire to form a local society became manifest in the minds of a number of men who had come into contact with co-operators in neighbouring societies. Additional information on the formation of the society was given in Chapter Four and it is known that the first committee contained the following members:

Messrs John Helliwell (Hall Gate) Woollen and Cotton Hand Weaver
John Greenwood (Hall Gate) Cotton Twister
James White (George's Fold) Occupation unknown
John Farrar (White Lee) Worsted weaver
Henry Thomas (Bottom Laith) Overlooker power looms
Alfred Smith (White Houses) Warehouseman
Thomas Hodgson (White Houses) Occupation unknown
Joseph Greenwood (Pall Mall) Cotton weaver
William Southwell (Burnley Road) Cotton mill manager
Joseph Farrar (Unknown) Woollen weaver
James Gledhill (Unknown) Cord Wainer

The occupations of the committee reflect clearly the type of community served by the infant society, indeed later analysis will show that the co-operative society in Mytholmroyd was a microcosm of the entire village community.

SOCIETY SHARE LEDGER 1861-76

A well preserved and legible share ledger has enabled a detailed analysis to be carried out showing the occupations, social classes, purchasing and investing characteristics of the members of this society. The share ledger covering the years 1861 to 1876 shows the names and addresses of all members of the society together with their purchasing and investing characteristics.[1]

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1. This is the only detailed share ledger located in Yorkshire.

By utilizing in 1854, six inches to the mile, map of the area (Map one), it has been possible to indicate the geographical distribution of the membership. The results show that co-operative membership was drawn from an area of approximately one mile radius from the village centre covering three square miles. To the north of the village, members were to be found on the edge of Wadsworth Moor; to the south members lived in placed like Spring Farm and Nab End, near Blackwood Common; to the west co-operators lived at Wood Hey; and to the east the outskirts of Midgley and Brearly. Most of the members however, lived in the most highly populated areas of Hallgate, Sowerby Scout Road (Square), Paradise Royal Fold, Pall Mall, Burnley Road, White Houses, Navvy Bank and Club Houses. The extent to which the co-operative society penetrated the entire community can be shown in greater details if we relate it to the number of households within the catchment area. Within the one mile radius there were seven hundred and twenty seven households.[1] Assuming that there was no more than one co-operator per household[2] and that there were 453 members,[3] then over 60% of all households (62.3%) contained a member of the Mytholmroyd Co-operative Society in 1871.

Having established that the society attracted support from almost every cluster of houses within a mile radius the 1871 census returns were used to show the occupational structure of the area.[4] 484 people were engaged as weavers of one kind or another, this representing 25% of the entire working population. Another 144 individuals were engaged on the spinning side of the textile industry or 7.63% of the total working population. Other sizeable groupings were farmers (3.86%), domestic servants (3.55%), winders (2.7%) and twisters (2.01%).

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1. In some homes more than one generation would live.
2. This is a reasonable assumption for only in a handful of cases were a father and son both members and living under the same roof.
3. 1871 membership figures.
4. This task was more difficult than appeared at first sight, as the area under study was at the crossroads of the three different townships and in the Registrar's sub-districts of Luddenden, Hebden Bridge and Sowerby.

CONTAINS

PULLOUTS

MAP ONE

Area of WADSWORTH 1224. 1. 36 in Sheet

WADSWORTH MOOR

SOWERBY RAMBLE

Hebden Bridge

Wadsworth

Mythomroyd

Blackwood Common

Crow Hill

Low Moor

Broad Head Hill

Old Chamber

Greenhalgh

Long Hoyds

Wood Top

Carr Green

Spring Wood Plantation

Old House Wood

Dry Sykes Wood

Park Wood

Hey Edge

Lower Hill

Hollin Top

Bracken Folly

Sharp Stones Edge

Sandstone Quarries

Higher Stone Delf

Old Castle

Snow Booth

Little Mount

Great Mount

British Camp

Wicken Hill

Middle Nook

Far Nook

Green Gates

Claytons

Faugh

Faugh Well

Rowland Lane

Carrs

Burnsall

Wadsworth Lanes

Wadsworth Banks

Hill House

Throstle Bower

Birches Inn Cote

Redacre

Redacre Fields

Redacre Delf

Upper White Lee

White Lee

Club Houses

Mount Pleasant

Coffee Hill

Wadsworth Road

Hill House Bank

Cough Hole

Bridge Top

Old Castle

Hey Head

Lane Top

Butt

Owlers

Stephenson House

Scar Bottom

Scar Bottom Square

Myrtle Grove

Paradise

Scout Bottom

Great Scout

Little Scout

Sunderland House

Scout Wood

Hathershelf Scout Delf

Bank Top

Holt Bank

Middle Hathershelf

Upper Hathershelf

Lower Hathershelf

Spring Head

Stanney End

Bent

Hollin Bar

Haven

Slack

Thacker

Ringstone Hill

Old Cross

Standing Stone

Tab End

Blind Lane

Upper Blind Lane

Sand Hole

Sand Green

Brow

Higher Hill

Middle Hill

Craggs

Wham

Lord Wood

Crumber Hill

Whand Wood

Spring House

Stocks

Nest

Scout Square

Myrtle Grove

Hall Top

Hall Bank

Hall Gate

Wood Hall

Wood Top

Cotton Mill

Carr House

Carr Green

Bodds Higgin

Great Jumps

Little Jumps

Stubb Clough

Little Stubbs

Great Stubbs

Lane Side

Park

Park Fold

Lower Lathe

Dairy Barn

White Field Lane

Old Harry Lane

Spencer Lane

Underth Hole

Bell Bottom

Bell House

Bell Stones

Hollow Field

Cat Stones

Higher Hill

Whams

Keelham

Keelham Flue

Broad Head End

Great House

Hollock Lee Bottom

Hollock Lee

Plane Tree

Hollin Wall

Fie Pits

Ferrock

Ferrock Hollow

Barn

Great House

Old Chamber

Mill

Wood Top

Cotton Mill

Underth Hole

Carr House

Carr Green

Bodds Higgin

Great Jumps

Little Jumps

Stubb Clough

Little Stubbs

Great Stubbs

Lane Side

Park

Park Fold

Lower Lathe

Dairy Barn

White Field Lane

Hey Edge

Old Harry Lane

Spencer Lane

Underth Hole

Bell Bottom

Bell House

Bell Stones

Hollow Field

Cat Stones

Higher Hill

Whams

Keelham

Keelham Flue

Broad Head End

Great House

Hollock Lee Bottom

Hollock Lee

Plane Tree

Hollin Wall

Fie Pits

Ferrock

Ferrock Hollow

Barn

Great House

Old Chamber

Mill

Wood Top

Cotton Mill

Underth Hole

Carr House

Carr Green

Bodds Higgin

Great Jumps

Little Jumps

Stubb Clough

Little Stubbs

Great Stubbs

Lane Side

Park

Park Fold

Lower Lathe

Dairy Barn

White Field Lane

Hey Edge

Old Harry Lane

Spencer Lane

Underth Hole

Bell Bottom

Bell House

Bell Stones

Hollow Field

Cat Stones

Higher Hill

Whams

Keelham

Keelham Flue

Broad Head End

Great House

Hollock Lee Bottom

Hollock Lee

Plane Tree

Hollin Wall

Fie Pits

Ferrock

Ferrock Hollow

Barn

Great House

Old Chamber

Mill

Wood Top

Cotton Mill

Underth Hole

Carr House

Carr Green

Bodds Higgin

Great Jumps

Little Jumps

Stubb Clough

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Hollock Lee

Plane Tree

Hollin Wall

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Ferrock

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Barn

Great House

Therefore the seven largest occupational groups accounted for 50% of the working population of the village.

By using the share ledger addresses, and the census returns the occupational structure of the co-operative society can be established showing that the society had a foothold in nearly every industry and trade. Twenty of the seventy three farmers were members. Not only was the society attracting the farmer who also happened to be the landlord of a local inn, but it attracted farmers with holdings of over forty acres. 58% of carpet weavers were co-operative members, as were two of the four recorded woollen manufacturers e.g. Thomas Ratcliffe, who was described in the census as a woollen Manufacturer 'employing seventy hands'. The only section of the community not well represented were housewives, and the main reason for this low figure was that in the vast majority of cases the society membership was held by the head of the family. A sample of nineteen women members in 1871 shows that only in three cases did women members have husbands living.[1] Six women were widows and listed as the head of the family. Seven other women were unmarried, four of them, including one unmarried mother, were shown as being the heads of their families, one lived with her mother, and two lived with their unmarried brothers. Thus in the main a woman would only become a member when she was the head of a family either caused through widowhood or remaining single.

SOCIAL STATUS

The availability of detailed occupational information provided the opportunity of studying the broad social groups as put forward by Armstrong[2]. In terms of social class the population can be divided into five categories:

---

1. Hannah Greenwood wife of a retired farmer, Sarah Barker wife of a cotton twister, Mary Cockcroft wife of a clerk.

2. E.A. Wrigley, English Historical Demography from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century, (1966), Chapter 6 by W.A. Armstrong "Social structure from early census returns" p 272 Appendix D.

THE CENTRAL STORE OF THE MYTHOLMROYD SOCIETY

Top Row: Fred Haigh and Lewis Ackroyd

Bottom Row: Robert Boulton, Percy Horsfall, Fred Stansfield, R. Hartley (Shop Manager) in foreground. Boy in shop Harry Greenwood. Man in shop went under the name "luggage" and lived at Hollin Hey. Circa 1930.

Category I - Capitalists, Manufacturers, Professional people, etc.
Category II - Smaller shopkeepers, Lower professional and Farmers, etc.
Category III - Skilled labour
Category IV - Semi-skilled labour
Category V - Unskilled labour

According to Armstrong these classes were defined in terms of social status, for the classes were based on 'general standing within the community'. However, and perhaps more particularly for the nineteenth century they may be regarded as groups of people having similar standards of life and probably, in general, similar incomes with which to maintain such standards. The Mytholmroyd census returns and co-operative share ledger produced the following breakdown:

Social Classes

	Whole Population	Co-operators[1]
Category I	48	10
Category II	259	60
Category III	1,000	223
Category IV	385	53
Category V	154	31
Rest of Population[2]	1,141	11

The social classes of the community and also the absolute number and percentage within each group who were co-operative members are shown in Table One.[3] The society gained most support, proportionately, amongst Class II which comprised the Lower Professional, Smaller Shop-keepers and Farmers, and even amongst Class I the society was well

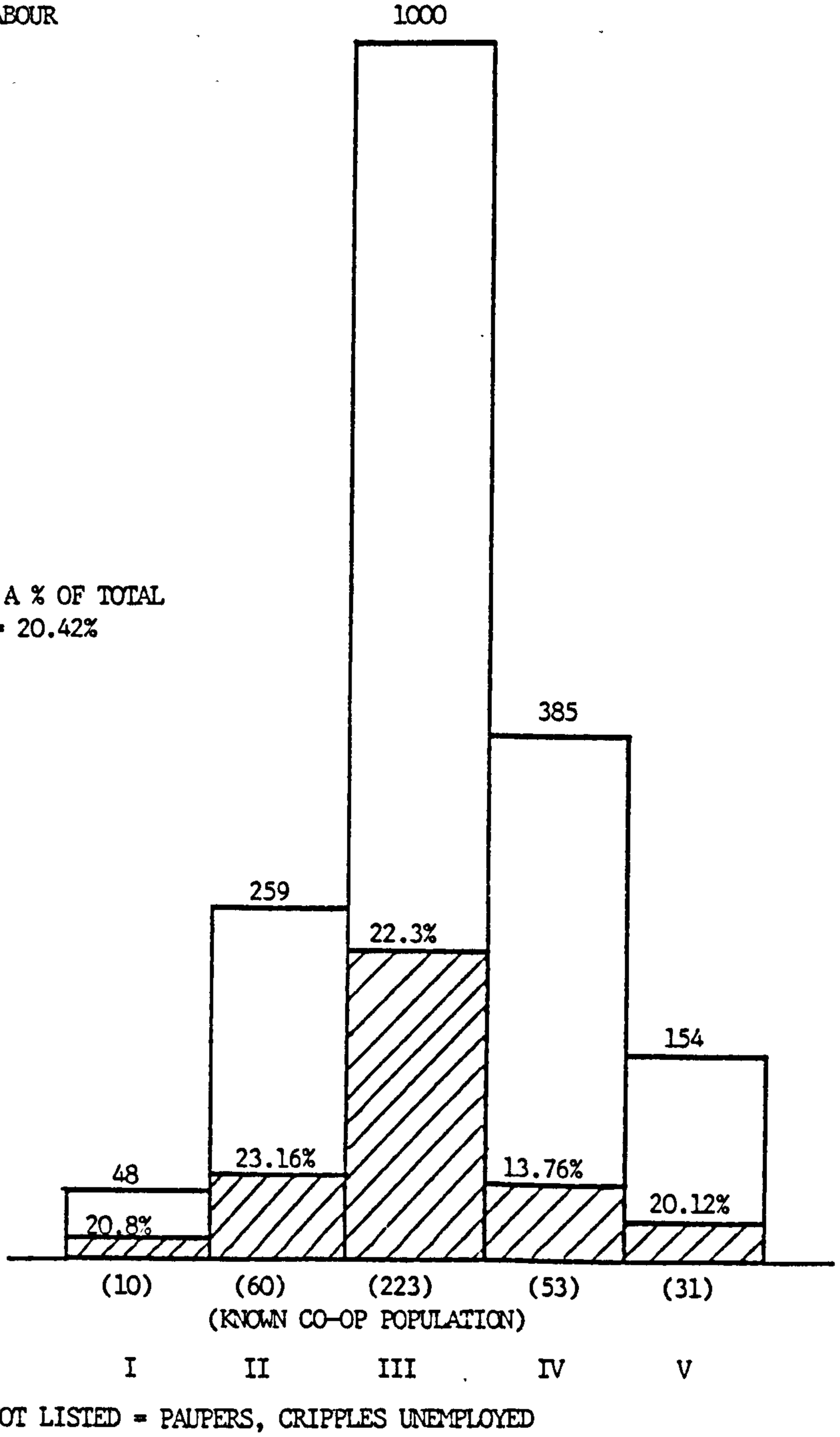
---

1. The occupations of 65 co-operators are unknown.
2. Housewives, paupers, cripples, pensioners, scholars, infants, no occupations, unemployed.
3. Appendix 6-1 shows the exact breakdown of co-operative members.

TABLE ONE MYTHOLMROYD - SOCIAL CLASSES

I CAPITALISTS, MANUFACTURERS, PROFESSIONAL
II SMALL SHOPKEEPERS, LOWER PROFESSIONAL, FARMERS
III SKILLED LABOUR
IV SEMI-SKILLED LABOUR
V UNSKILLED

CO-OP MEMBERSHIP AS A % OF TOTAL WORKING POPULATION = 20.42%



REST OF POPULATION NOT LISTED = PAUPERS, CRIPPLES UNEMPLOYED
HOUSEWIVES, SCHOLARS & INFANTS
(1141) with 11 of this group being Co-operators)

Source: Share Ledger 1861-76, Census Returns 1871

represented. The Skilled workers represented the largest section within the community and 22.3% of this class were members of the co-operative society. When turning to the Semi-skilled Class IV, it is clear that they lagged behind all other groups but still accounted for 53 members. However, the level of support amongst the Unskilled workers, Class V, a class not usually associated with membership of any self-help organisation, is significant and unexpected. Just over twenty per cent of Unskilled workers were co-operative members, only slightly below the average for the total working population. The proportion of co-operative members among the Unskilled was nearly seven per cent higher than for the Semi-skilled, and only slightly below the figure for Skilled co-operators. Whilst recognising that the numerical strength of the society lay in the hands of the Skilled worker, the Mytholmroyd society drew support from all classes within the community, especially amongst the Lower Professional class, and significantly amongst the Unskilled workers.

SURVEY OF PURCHASING AND INVESTING BEHAVIOUR

Sampling Method

The 1861 to 1876 ledger shows that in 1871 the society had 453 members. Plotting the purchasing and investing profiles of so many people would have been very time consuming, therefore a sampling method was introduced. Every fifth member was selected and this resulted in a sample of 93 individual co-operators. A schedule containing purchasing and investing information was prepared designed to show the purchasing characteristics of the sample; purchases by social class; shareholding characteristics; shareholding by social class; cross tabulation of shareholdings by purchases; withdrawal type. The results were placed on punch card, and read into the computer.[1]

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1. The programme used was the University of Pittsburgh, SPSS - 10, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, Version 6.02B (1 August 1976).

Purchasing Characteristics of Sample

In 1871 the annual sales figure for the society was £9,486.10s.0d. and as there were 453 members the yearly average per member was £20.94 or £10.47 per six monthly time period. Bearing this figure in mind when looking at Table Two (Frequency of Purchases), it is clear that the majority of members were purchasing below this average. 35.8% of purchases were below £5, and a remarkably high 58.4% of purchases were below £10 with only 16.6% between £10.01 and £15. In fact, three-quarters of all purchases were below £15 per six monthly time period.

Purchases by Social Class

The computed figures for purchases by social class are shown in Appendix 6-2 and graphically represented in Table Three. The most common purchasing category for the Professional class was under £5, accounting for 40% of their purchases at the society. Class I devoted another 35.6% in the £5.01 to £10 range, and this pattern with the majority of their purchases in the groups below £10, is repeated for the Lower Professional, Skilled and Unskilled classes with only the Semi-skilled not exceeding 50%. The Skilled workers, the backbone of both the community and the co-operative society were by far the largest purchasing group, but had 61.8% of their purchases below £10 and their largest purchasing category was below £5. However, this pattern was not repeated amongst the Semi-skilled, the majority of whose purchases were above £10, and in the seven purchasing categories above £10 the Semi-skilled exceeded, in relative terms, the percentage figure of the Skilled workers.

Even the Unskilled workers could claim, on average, to be better represented in the higher purchasing categories than the Skilled worker. 31.9% of the unskilled purchases were made in the £10.01 to £15 range compared with 14.6% amongst Skilled workers, and 17% amongst Semi-skilled workers.

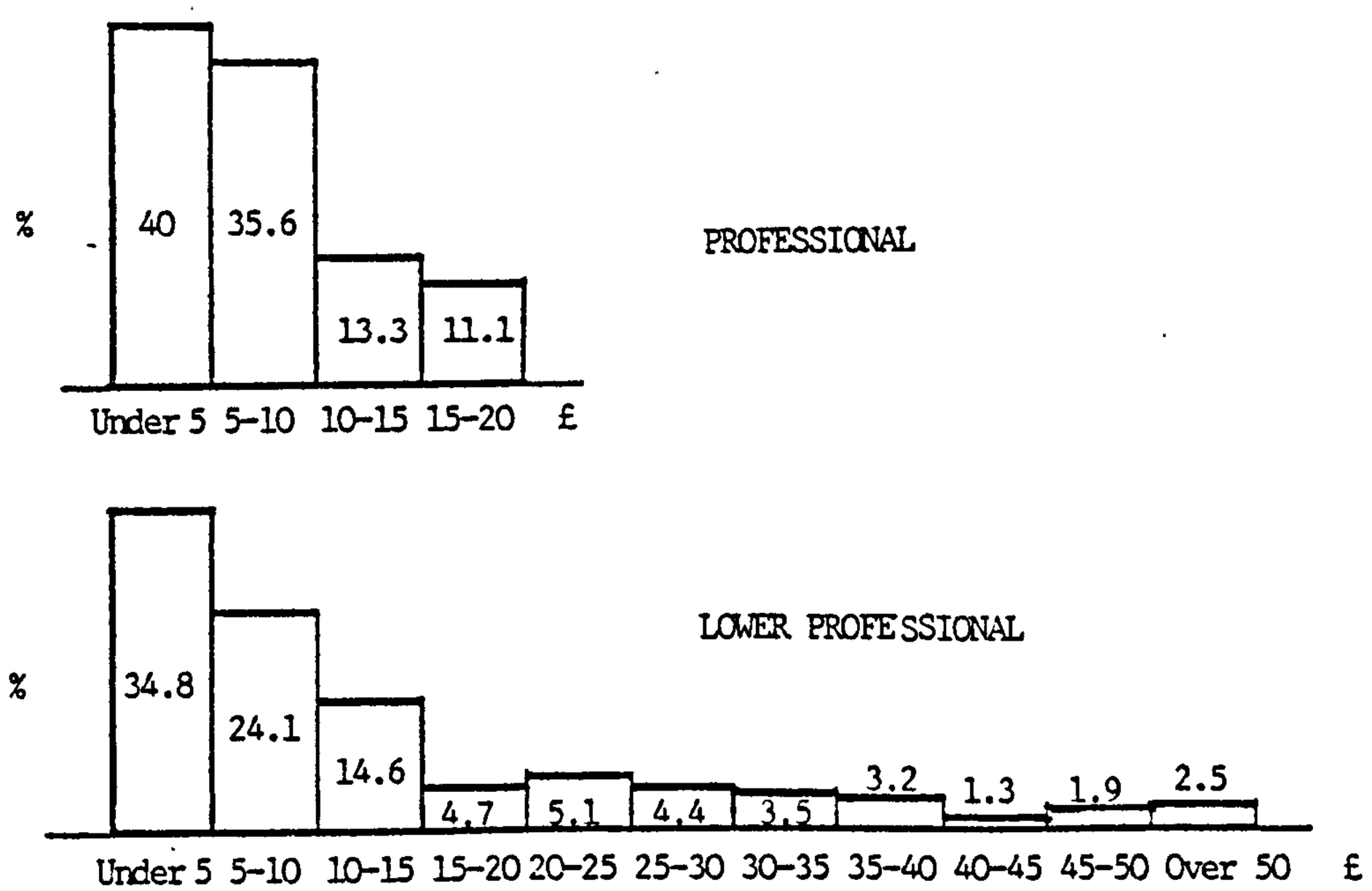
The inference that the Semi-skilled and Unskilled workers seem in relative percentage terms to have purchased in the higher purchasing groups is not an easy one to explain, and seems to contradict the orthodox view that these groups did not share in co-operative

TABLE TWO FREQUENCY OF PURCHASES

Purchases	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Cumulative Frequency
Under £5	634	35.8	35.8
£5.01 to £10	401	22.6	58.4
£10.01 to £15	294	16.6	75.0
£15.01 to £20	168	9.5	84.5
£20.01 to £25	101	5.7	90.2
£25.01 to £30	56	3.2	93.4
£30.01 to £35	46	2.6	96.0
£35.01 to £40	25	1.4	97.4
£40.01 to £45	16	0.9	98.3
£45.01 to £50	14	0.8	99.1
Over £50	16	0.9	100.0

Source: Share Ledger 1861-76

TABLE THREE PURCHASES BY SOCIAL CLASS



Source: Share Ledger 1861-76, Census Returns 1871

activity.[1] It must be recognised that in absolute terms the Skilled workers were the largest purchasing group by far, but in relative terms their frequency of purchasing was in the lower purchasing range. A possible explanation of these results is that the poorest workers tended to make a conscious decision to commit themselves fully to the society in order to secure maximum benefits; 'Beggars cannot be choosers'. A better paid person could shop around for a bargain, visit neighbouring shopping centres such as Hebden Bridge, Sowerby Bridge, Todmorden, or more importantly, Halifax. It should also be noted that societies like Mytholmroyd did give credit and this could have, therefore, tied lower paid workers to the society while Skilled workers may have had less need of this facility.[2] Another explanation could be that a higher proportion of the semi-skilled expenditure was on food and was virtually a necessity.

Shareholding Characteristics of Sample

When we turn our attention to the shareholding characteristics of our sample, a familiar pattern re-emerges. As in the case of purchases the majority of shareholdings were at the lower end of the scale with the majority below £5. Table Four shows the frequencies of share holdings with 40.5% of observations being £1 or less, and 66.5% below £5 and only 6.3% above £50.[3]

Shareholding by Social Class

Share holdings by social class is shown in Appendix 6-3 and graphically represented in Table Five. The majority of the Professional class seem to have had only modest investments in the society, with nearly three quarters (73.4%) of shareholdings being below £5, with none above £45. The Professional class did not appear to be utilizing the society for their surplus funds, funds that they could obviously use to better financial advantage elsewhere. The

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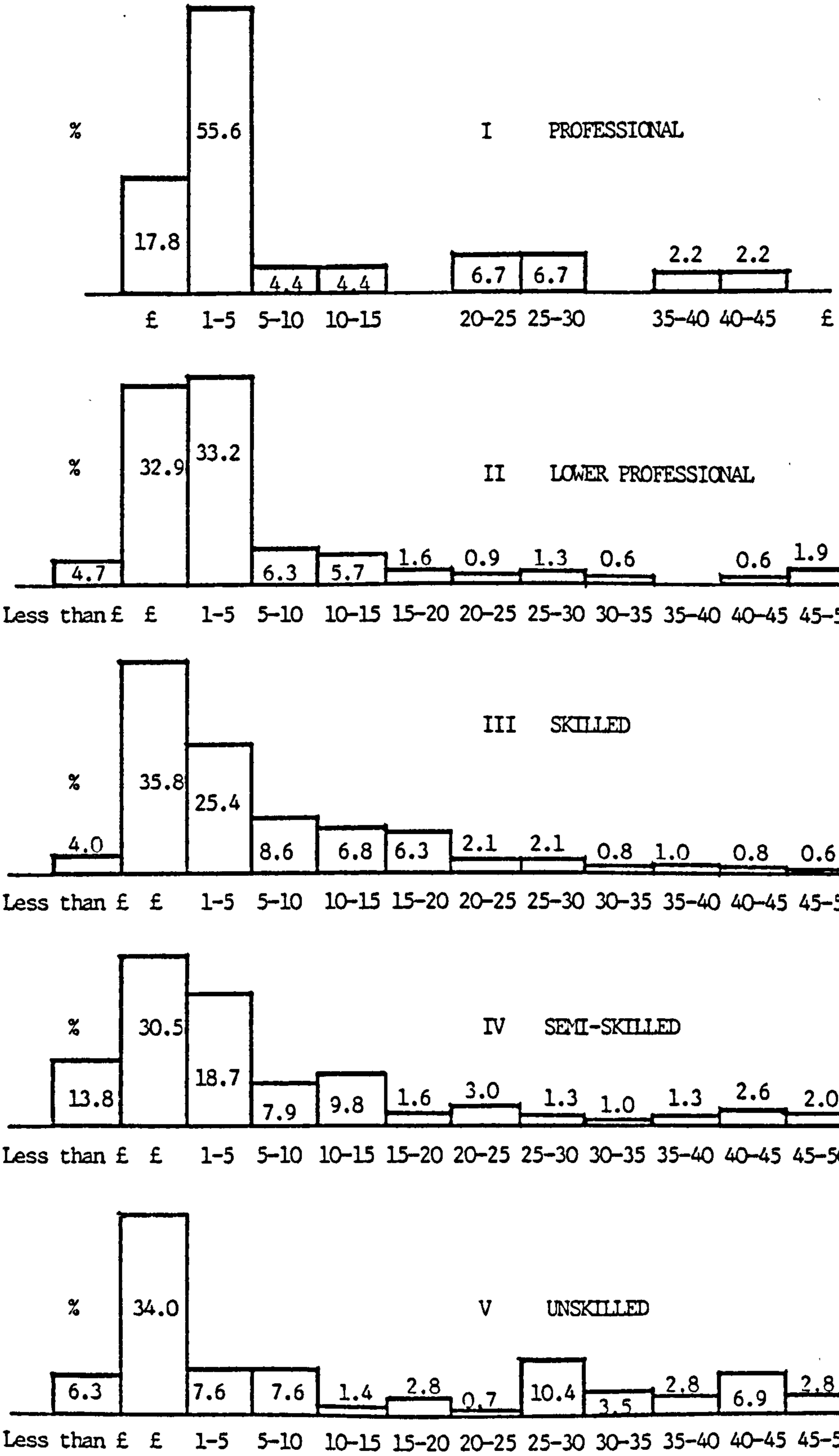
1. A view expressed in the previous chapter of this thesis.
2. This point will be considered in the next chapter - Chapter 7 p 244-250.
3. The mean for shareholding stood at £4+.

TABLE FOUR FREQUENCY OF SHARE HOLDINGS

Shares	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Cumulative Frequency
Less than £1	115	6.5	6.5
£1	602	34.0	40.5
£1.01 to £5	462	26.1	66.5
£5.01 to £10	127	7.2	73.7
£10.01 to £15	105	5.9	79.7
£15.01 to £20	61	3.4	83.1
£20.01 to £25	52	2.9	86.1
£25.01 to £30	42	2.4	88.4
£30.01 to £35	16	0.9	89.3
£35.01 to £40	18	1.0	90.3
£40.01 to £45	38	2.1	92.5
£45.01 to £50	22	1.2	93.7
Over £50	111	6.3	100.0

Source: Share Ledger 1861-76

TABLE FIVE SHARE HOLDINGS BY SOCIAL CLASS



Source: Share Ledger 1861-76, Census Returns 1871

Lower Professional class of shareholders were however more evenly distributed throughout the different categories, yet with 70.8% of observations below £5, this group could not be regarded as large investors, even though they accounted for 27.3% of all investments in the £45.01 to £50 range, and 28.8% of investments in the top investing range. This pattern of investing in the lower categories is repeated for all Skilled workers, who as a class, constituted 40.5% of all recorded investments. 65% of Skilled workers invested £5 or below. In the majority of counts the Skilled workers were the most numerous, but in relative percentage terms they often were eclipsed by the other classes. Indeed, in the investing category over £50, 5.6% of Skilled workers were represented compared with 6.6% of Semi-skilled and 13.2% of the Unskilled. When we turn to classes IV and V we note that in relative percentage terms they often, especially in the higher investing ranges, exceed the figures obtained by classes I, II and III. Although the majority of Semi-skilled investments were below £5, in every category above £30 it exceeded the Skilled workers, and was one per cent higher at the top scale. Unskilled workers unlike all other groups did not go above 50% in the first three categories (below £5), and in every category above £25 they exceeded the relative percentage figures of all other social classes. The Unskilled workers investments in the very top scale accounted for 13.2% of their total investments and in absolute terms the Unskilled accounted for 17.1% of all investments over £50. Thus, as in the case of purchases, the Semi and Unskilled workers were contributing much more than their mere numbers would suggest. For practical reasons the Semi-skilled and Unskilled would need to take greater care of the money they possessed, and the attraction of the co-operative store was very obvious, selling good value produce and giving a cash discount at the end of a six monthly period. To become a member would entail making weekly contributions until the minimum share holding, £1, was obtained, and as this section of the community had most probably never had the opportunity to save this new purchasing and saving pattern could have soon become a norm, once they started to see the benefits accruing from their loyalty to one particular organisation.[1] One additional, though negative reason for their

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1. To get maximum dividend you had to be a member, this could have forced many to save who otherwise would not have done so.

DECORATED WAGON

David Hughes (with apron) on waggon. Man on shaft unknown. Driver Mr. Barker with his son Teddy.
Cira 1930

higher relative investments could again have been associated with the fact that credit would be allowed according to share holdings, thus encouraging a member to build up his shareholding in case the need arose for him to require credit. However, it was more likely that the society attracted the Unskilled, as it did with all other classes in the community, because it provided all the goods required by the ordinary family, goods that were of a high standard which could be purchased in the village without the need to travel to other centres. The Unskilled worker could do all his shopping under one roof, he would soon see the benefits of becoming a member, and the large sums of money handed back[1] to him at the end of the six monthly period would in many respects, signal that for the first time in his life he had achieved a degree of economic independence.

CROSS TABULATION OF SHARE HOLDING BY PURCHASE

A cross-tabulation of shares by purchases is shown in Appendix 6-4. The most common combination of purchaser and shareholder in the Mytholmroyd Co-operative Society was the member who had invested between £1.01 and £5 in share capital and purchased under £5 in each six monthly period, this group accounted for 15.9% of the total sample. The second most popular combination was that in which the member had a £1 share holding and purchased between £5.01 and £10, this being 8.3% of the sample. The third most frequent combination had again only £1 invested in the society but purchased in the £10.01 to £15 category, being 8.1% of sample. Thus the three most common combinations accounted for approximately one third of our sample, and the top seven encompassed 50% of the sample. The twenty five most common purchasing and investing combinations are shown in Table Six.

The majority of members purchasing under £5 had shareholdings of under £5, with only 1.1% having investments above £50. Indeed, in every purchasing group, with the exception of the £45.01 to £50 plus category, the majority of members had shareholdings of less than £5. Table Seven shows the purchasing characteristics of co-operators who invested

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1. Both interest on share capital and dividend on purchases.

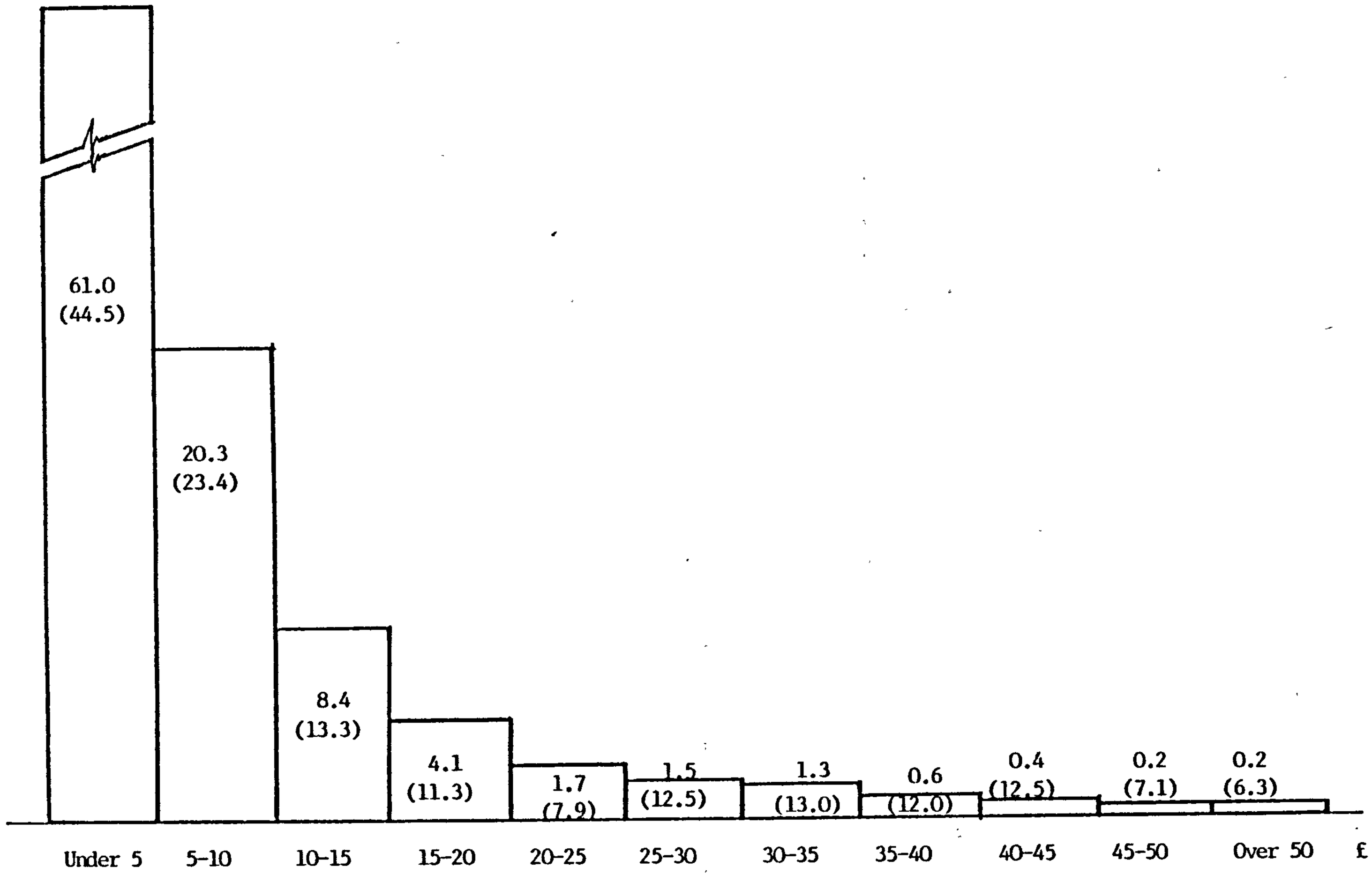
TABLE SIX THE 25 MOST COMMON PURCHASING AND INVESTING COMBINATIONS

No.	Count	Value of Share	Value of Purchases	% of Total
1	282	£1.01 to £5	Under £5	15.9
2	147	£1	£5.01 to £10	8.3
3	144	£1	£10.01 to £15	8.1
4	94	£1.01 to £5	£5.01 to £10	5.3
5	89	£1	Under £5	5.0
6	80	£1	£15.01 to £20	4.6
7	64	£5.01 to £10	Under £5	3.6
8	59	Less than £1	Under £5	3.3
9	55	£1	£20.01 to £25	3.1
10	47	£10.01 to £15	Under £5	2.7
11	39	£1.01 to £5	£10.01 to £15	2.2
12	33	Less than £1	£5.01 to £10	1.9
13	32	£1	£25.01 to £30	1.8
	32	£10.01 to £15	£5.01 to £10	1.8
15	29	£15.01 to £20	Under £5	1.6
	29	Over £50	£10.01 to £15	1.6
17	22	£1	£30.01 to £35	1.2
	22	£20.01 to £25	Under £5	1.2
	22	Over £50	£5.01 to £10	1.2
20	21	£5.01 to £10	£5.01 to £10	1.2
	21	Over £50	£15.01 to £20	1.2
22	19	£1.01 to £5	£15.01 to £20	1.1
23	16	£1	£35.01 to £40	0.9
	16	£25.01 to £30	Under £5	0.9
25	15	£15.01 to £20	£5.01 to £10	0.9

Top 25 Combinations account for 80.5% of Total Sample.

Source: Share Ledger 1861-76, Census Returns 1871

TABLE SEVEN PURCHASING CHARACTERISTICS OF CO-OPERATORS WHO INVESTED BETWEEN £1.01 AND £5 IN SOCIETY



Source: Share Ledger 1861-76, Appendix 6-4

between £1.01 and £5, this included the most common combination. 61% of these investors purchased under £5, and 81.3% under £10. A sizeable proportion of members were, therefore, investing moderate sums of money in the society and purchasing below the mean. Appendix 6-4 however, shows that a considerable proportion of members in the top three purchasing groups (over £40) were also high investors. This observation is graphically shown in Table Eight in which the purchasing characteristics of co-operators with over £50 invested in the society is given. 31.3% of those purchasing over £50 were also shareholders of over £50 and this high figure is surpassed by the £45.01 to £50 purchasing group with a percentage figure of 35.7%. Contrasting these findings with Table Seven, it is clear that this investing category had a much greater propensity to purchase, with 19.8% purchasing between £5.01 and £10, 26.1% between £10.01 and £15 and 18.9% purchasing between £15.01 and £20.

The Mytholmroyd minute books show that the committee were concerned about members using the society for investing purposes only. However, the above findings seem to indicate that if there was a serious problem it was most obvious at the lower end of the investing scale, especially in the group that had between £1.01 and £5 invested and which purchased under £5. It is clear that those who invested the largest sums in the society, on the whole, did purchase more than the average member. It is, however, worth noting that investing rather than shopping is repeated for a number of higher investing groups. 50.4% of those investing between £5.01 and £10 purchased under £5, and this is repeated for 44.8% of those investing £10.01 to £15; 45.5% of those investing £15.01 to £20; 42.3% of those investing £20.01 to £25; 38.1% of those who invested £25.01 to £30; and 34.2% of those who invested £40.01 to £45. These six investing categories accounted for 10.7% of the total sample, and when added to the most common combination (15.9%) this accounts for 26.6% of sample observations.[1] Therefore, over one quarter of the members of Mytholmroyd Co-operative Society had only a slight commitment to purchasing, and the investment

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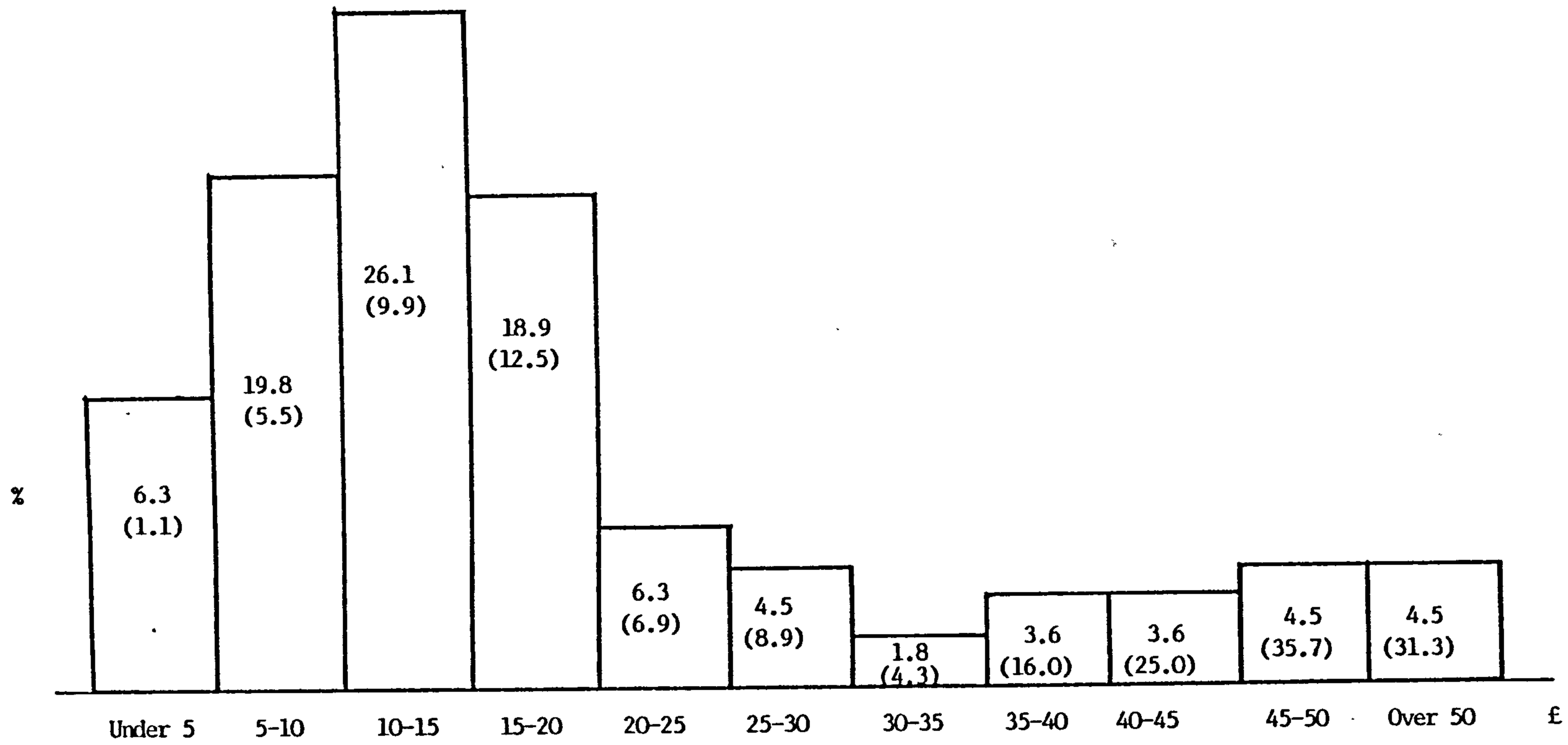
1. Shareholding groups less than £1 or £1 have not been included, these being the very small sums needed to become a member.

TABLE EIGHT PURCHASING CHARACTERISTICS OF CO-OPERATORS WITH OVER £50 INVESTED IN SOCIETY



Source: Share Ledger 1861-76, Appendix 6-4

side of membership seemed to have been more attractive to them. A sizeable proportion of this group could have been using the society as a form of savings bank. The society offered an attractive interest rate, 5%, and shop hours being long would enable a person to withdraw his savings if required, immediately.[1] Two thirds of members had shareholdings above the £1 minimum, and this in itself would seem to indicate that members were keen to utilize the savings function of the society. The society probably gave many people their first chance to save, especially amongst the unskilled, and it would seem inevitable that the society would not merely attract the members who shopped and saved, but also the member who only wanted to keep his savings in a safe place, which the co-operative society in the village of Mytholmroyd certainly was.

WITHDRAWAL TYPE

The shopping and investing characteristics of the Mytholmroyd Co-operative Society membership have been shown above. The tangible results of their loyalty were to be seen in dividend and share interest payments. From the computed results of our sample it is clear that in the majority of cases members withdrew all dividends and interest payments at the end of each six monthly trading period. The withdrawal type discovered at Mytholmroyd is quantified below:

Frequency of Withdrawals

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Cumulative Frequency
No withdrawals	338	19.1	19.1
Withdraws Both	1,280	72.3	91.4
Some Withdrawals	153	8.6	100.0

1. For large withdrawals the society could ask for prior warning, but generally requests for withdrawals were met immediately.

Only 19.1% of the recorded observations were retained in the society. 72.3% of members withdrew both, and a mere 8.6% allowed either a dividend or interest to be added to their share accounts. In order to see if specific groups had different patterns of withdrawals the findings were grouped in terms of social class.

Withdrawal Type by Social Class

The withdrawal type by social class is shown in Table Nine. The Skilled workers, due to their numerical strength, constituted the largest section within the withdrawal types. However, in relative percentage terms a much more significant interpretation can be made. The section referring to those who made 'no withdrawals' shows that a larger percentage of Lower Professional people did not withdraw monies from the society, and they were followed closely by the Professional class, the Skilled workers, the Semi-skilled and Unskilled. Only 9% of Unskilled people retained their dividends and interest payments compared with 17% for Skilled workers. The Unskilled workers headed the list when it came to withdrawing both dividends and interest, with the smallest percentage figure being recorded for the Skilled workers. This would seem to show that the Unskilled worker had a higher propensity to consume than the Skilled worker, being therefore more likely to spend today rather than save for tomorrow. The fact that the Professional class had a higher percentage figure than both the Skilled and Lower Professional classes could indicate that these people could utilize money from dividends in a much more rewarding way outside, than re-investing in the society. But one should remember that any conclusion relating to the Professional Class is flimsy owing to the very small number of people in this class. Table Nine shows that all classes were likely to withdraw dividends and that the Unskilled were less likely to retain monies than any other class.[1] The category concerning 'some withdrawals' is not very revealing; some people withdrew interest on share capital, others withdrew dividends. However,by looking at the share ledger it is clear that only a small

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1. The society would have its main sale starting at the same time that dividend and interest payments were made.

TABLE NINE WITHDRAWAL TYPE BY SOCIAL CLASS CLASSIFICATION

		Professional I	Lower Professional II	Skilled Manual III	Semi-Skilled IV	Unskilled Manual V	Not Known	Row Total
No Withdrawals	Count	10	72	122	48	13	73	338
	Row %	3.0	21.3	36.1	14.2	3.8	21.6	19.1
	Col %	22.2	22.8	17.0	15.7	9.0	29.9	
	Total %	0.6	4.1	6.9	2.7	0.7	4.1	
Withdraws Both	Count	33	218	489	248	129	163	1,280
	Row %	2.6	17.0	38.2	19.4	10.1	12.7	72.3
	Col %	73.3	69.0	68.2	81.3	89.6	66.8	
	Total %	1.9	12.3	27.6	14.0	7.3	9.2	
Some Withdrawals	Count	2	26	106	9	2	8	153
	Row %	1.3	17.0	69.3	5.9	1.3	5.2	8.6
	Col %	4.4	8.2	14.8	3.0	1.4	3.3	
	Total %	0.1	1.5	6.0	0.5	0.1	0.5	
	Column	45	316	717	305	144	244	1,771
	Total	2.5	17.8	40.5	17.2	8.1	13.8	100.0

Source: Share Ledger 1861-76 and Census Returns 1871

minority of members let interest and dividend payments accumulate. In the main, additions to share holdings were by lump sums that did not appear to have come from co-operative sources.

The Mytholmroyd material has given an insight into a village society that flourished in the second half of the nineteenth century. Although the findings relate to this one particular Yorkshire society later chapters will consider whether there are any wider implications for the rest of Yorkshire or indeed the United Kingdom.

The society was clearly attracting a sizeable percentage of the community. The goods and services provided by the Mytholmroyd co-operative appealed to people of all social classes. Indeed it was impossible to separate the community from the society for they were both so closely linked in economic and social terms. The community was mobilizing people for collective action. Such local communities were places favourable to innovations based on trust.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CAUSES OF CO-OPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH

"I have always wished, once at any rate, to be face to face with the citizens of that state within a state, which is called the Co-operative Movement. The number of your members, the extent of your capital, and the great principle of the union of interests which guides the Movement, in my opinion constitutes nothing less than a state within a state".[1]

These opening remarks made by Lord Rosebery in his Presidential address to the Glasgow Congress of 1890 show the progress made by the Movement in the second half of the nineteenth century but they also, if not intentionally, describe the independent and autonomous development of the co-operative sector which was certainly a central feature of its growth. While self-assertion certainly occurred within a broader acceptance of the social framework, and an expectation that working-class claims could be accommodated within that framework, there was a distinctive radical ideology, drawing on elements of Owenite and Chartist tradition. Thus the transition of nineteenth century Co-operation 'from community building to shopkeeping' was by no means sudden or complete. Wider aspirations underlay the struggles of co-operators, indeed their persistence and self-sacrifice under adverse conditions cannot be explained without some element of idealism and collective commitment. There are thus large areas of contradiction and ambiguity in Victorian working-class attitudes, between, on the one hand, the assertion of working class identity, on the other the adoption of a consensual language shared with dominant groups in society.

The Co-operative Movement did work to improve the lot of the working man within the existing system as the proponents of embourgeoisement claim, but still kept a clear and publicly articulated conception of the opposition between the interests of labour and capital. A belief in the progressive intellectual and political emancipation of the working classes, a tradition of working-class mutuality and collective self-help, and an emphasis on the personal virtues of self-

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1. Congress Report, 1890, Inaugural address, p 6.

discipline combined to form an autonomous culture. Thompson describes the change that had occurred:

> "... by the early years of the nineteenth century it is possible to say that collectivist values are dominant in many industrial communities, there is a definite moral code, with sanctions against the backleg, the 'tools' of the employer or the unneighbourly, and with an intolerance towards the eccentric or individualist. Collective values are consciously held and are propagated in political theory, trade union ceremonial, moral rhetoric. It is, indeed, this collective self-consciousness with its corresponding theory, institutions, discipline and community values which distinguishes the nineteenth century working class from the eighteenth century mob".[1]

The prosperity of the Victorian economy at this time created an environment in which workers in the growth sectors of the economy could markedly improve their living standards, provided that they were individually prudent and collectively used their strength to improve rewards at work, via unions and their position as consumers via co-operatives. It is clear that the actuality of obedience and satisfactory role performance is all that dominant groups require of subordinates, not the internalisation of an ideology. Our impression of an independent path of development is reinforced when certain subjects, that were essential to growth, are analysed, namely legal status, democratic control, credit provision and beliefs and attitudes.

LEGAL STATUS

To make progress it was essential that the Movement had the correct legal framework to work within. The post Rochdale Movement was severely hampered by lack of suitable legislation. The 1846 Friendly Societies Act meant that a society could only hold property through trustees and societies were not permitted to trade with other than their own members. The infant Movement owed a debt of gratitude

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1. E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (1970) p 463.

to its influential supporters both inside and outside Parliament, especially to the Christian Socialists. Men like E.V. Neale, Thomas Hughes, J.M.F. Ludlow and Lord Ripon were able to persuade the authorities that legislative changes were necessary for the development of an organisation that did not threaten to overturn the established order. An early Registrar, E.W. Brabrook, probably echoed the thoughts of his superiors when he gave the reasons why the new legislation relating to co-operative societies were termed 'Industrial and Provident':

> "It was intended to imitate the design that such societies should be industrial as making their profits by the mutual personal exertions of the members and provident as distributing their profits by way of provision for the future".[1]

The 1852 Industrial and Provident Societies' Act did not confer corporate status nor limited liability except that the liability of a member ceased two years after his withdrawal from membership. The 1862 Act granted societies wider powers and privileges that included corporate status, they achieved a legal personality separate from the personalities of the members comprising them. They could sue and be sued in their own names and own property without trustees. In fact this Act did confirm limited liability in the modern sense of the term. The maximum shareholding was increased to £200, shares were allowed to be withdrawable or transferable, the rate of interest was allowed to be fixed by the rules of the society, and, very importantly for the development of federal societies, one society was allowed to invest up to £200 in the shares of another society.[2]

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1. E.W. Brabrook, The Law Relating to Industrial and Provident Societies, (1869), p 1.
2. Other changes included: - the statutory restrictions on the rate of interest on loans to a society and on the amount that a society might borrow were removed and these matters were left to be fixed by members of the society. The 1862 Act also removed the restriction on the power of a society to own land and work mines and quarries.

EDWARD VANSITTART NEALE

In return for these privileges every society was required to have a registered office, to provide a copy of the rules to any person who demanded it, to permit the inspection of certain books and registers by members and persons with an interest in the funds and to make an annual return to the Registrar. Further Acts passed in 1867 and 1876 consolidated the legal position of societies and the 1876 Act in fact gave Industrial and Provident societies an independent and almost self-contained code of law and they ceased to be subject to any provisions in the Friendly Societies Acts.

The degree of legal protection and the scope of operations is clearly shown in the rules of the Leeds society revised and amended 3rd October 1872:

> "The object of this society is to carry on in common the trade of general dealers, both wholesale and retail, for the better enabling them to purchase food, firing, clothes and other necessaries; also for the purpose of manufacturing flour, or of spinning, weaving and manufacturing raw cotton, hemp, flax, wool, silks, and yarn, also the business of farmers, builders, and contractors, brickmakers, iron manufacturers, workers of mines and quarries; also to buy and sell land".[1]

Growth would have been seriously curtailed or even impossible if the Movement had not obtained full legal protection. In turn, legal protection was granted in recognition of the Movement's desire to work within the existing framework of society. The promoters of these legal changes had paved the way for a comprehensive co-operative sector with retailing being just one wing of a Movement that would encompass all aspects of economic and social development. The machinery was in place, yet the desire by working people to move far beyond retailing was limited, which is understandable when considering that immediate benefits had more intrinsic appeal than grand aspirations. Co-operators appreciated the work done on their behalf by the Christian Socialists and others, but it was for them alone to determine what direction they

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1. P 3. Deposited at the Registry of Friendly Societies, London.

should take in the field of growth and development.

DEMOCRATIC CONTROL

The principle of democratic control - one man one vote - was an essential ingredient of the Rochdale model of Co-operation. Voting was not based on share capital held, for this would have undermined the essentially simple democratic foundation on which the consumers' Co-operative Movement rests. Open membership goes closely with equal voting rights. Members elect their committee, the committee appoints managers, managers hire staff and the staff serve the members. The committee system of management and democratic control was a great success and must have given many men their first positions of responsibility, it expressed all the virtues of democracy. Committees responded to the desires of their members and local autonomy and control were important characteristics of the Movement. Unlike local friendly society lodges and trade union branches which had central control and direction, the local co-operative management committee exercised final and ultimate control of their own destiny. National federations such as the Co-operative Wholesale Society Ltd., and the Co-operative Union Ltd., could and did offer advice but the final decision rested with each individual management committee.

The co-operative mode of control and participation accorded well with the viewpoint of John Stuart Mill. C.B. Macpherson, the political philosopher, describes Mill's ideal of democratic society as follows:

> "Society ... need not be and should not be a collection of competing, conflicting, self-interested consumers and appropriators. It could and should be a community of exerters and developers of their human capacities. But it was not that now. The problem was to get it to advance that. The case for democracy was that it gave all the citizens a direct incentive to participate actively ...".[1]

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1. C.B. Macpherson, The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy, (Oxford, 1977), p 51.

Co-operative democracy gave many a taste for democracy years before universal suffrage was introduced. In the majority of cases the committee of management would meet weekly and all decisions affecting the running of the society were resolved here. The membership could voice their opinions at the regular meetings, but generally the custom was to hold them quarterly with special interest being focused on the half yearly meetings at which the six monthly balance sheet would be scrutinized. The committee of management would also provide the membership of the main committees. In Leeds during 1849 there were four main committees - Finance, Stock, Mill and General Arrangements. The responsibilities of the committees were as follows:

i. Stock Committee - providing for and the disposal of all stock for sale

ii. Mill Committee - provide for and secure an efficient and economical working of the Mill - its operations and dependencies

iii. General Arrangements Committee - provide and arrange for all meetings or business that may arise, not already provided for by rule or law

iv. Finance Committee - provide the funds and superintend all disbursements[1]

In the late 1850's when the society resolved to branch out into the Grocery trade the General Board naturally resolved to establish an appropriate committee: "That the Grocery Committee be empowered to take a shop at Armley for the purpose of opening a branch store on the Rochdale Principle".[2]

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1. First meeting of the Board of Directors held at the mill in Marshall Street, Tuesday, 5th June, 1849.

2. General Board Meeting, 14th December, 1858.

The system of democratic control was based on "the committee" and was basically the same for both large and small societies. Committee members were making many of the decisions that today would be in the hands of salaried staff. Power and responsibility were delegated widely, with sub-committees covering tasks that seem very trivial today, but that one hundred years ago were clearly seen as being essential to the successful functioning of the society. The sub-committees in the main only had a short life, but they did have a significant role in the management of the society.

In the larger societies there was certainly not the same degree of member participation that typified the smaller village-type society. Foster noted in Oldham that

> "the really interesting thing, however, is the degree to which this large membership remained controlled by (and may be subordinated to) a relatively small group of semi-permanent officials".[1]

In cities with hundreds of thousands of people it was impossible to generate a community atmosphere and this problem applied to the larger societies whose members would be scattered over many square miles and engaged in a multitude of occupations. The Leeds society did however, try to resolve this problem by operating a system of local committees which according to John Holmes helped to generate more interest in the activities of the society.[2] Local committees were formed in various parts of the city and designed to

> "propagate co-operation, to look up old members not dealing, and to get new ones, who would deal with the society. This became the turning point of a visible and even rapid success. The local committees began to stir up the directors, if sluggish, and to support them when working; and so success followed, and additions followed success".

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1. J. Foster, Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution, (1974), p 222.

2. Co-operative News, Saturday, 13th September, 1873, p 473.

This tradition of trying to involve members in the affairs of their society has carried on in Leeds where today the society goes to great expense in arranging a postal ballot for all elections.

The power and influence of the committee were considerable and in many respects they assumed the role of co-operative society magistrates. They were custodians of the members' savings, and this stewardship gave them certain powers if a member transgressed in his dealings with the society. The wrath of the Castleford committee was duly brought to bear on a lady member:

> "That Mrs. Cook of 91 Glebe Street, attended the board room to answer a charge of obtaining goods without payment, and the charge was admitted. It was decided that she pay for the goods amounting to £1 11s 5d as per list submitted by W. Webster: that she contribute £1 to the Leeds infirmary, and that she be denied the privilege of any further trading with this society".[1]

Long hours for which only small payments were made, and many years of continuous service typified the nineteenth century committeeman.[2] There is no record of any women being elected to serve on a committee in the nineteenth century. The photograph of the Mytholmroyd Co-operative Society taken in 1911 is in many respects a pictorial record of the development process of a nineteenth century society, but also an impressive record of service. The men who appear in the photograph are in some cases the sons of the pioneers. Henry Helliwell joined the committee in 1910, but his father was first elected to the board in 1872 and was president for 11 years; William Dewhirst, treasurer in 1911 had held this post for 12 years and had joined the board in 1895; Fred Smith joined the board in 1890, becoming president in 1906; James Farrar the secretary, was the most senior member of the 1911 board, having joined in 1870 and becoming treasurer in 1876;

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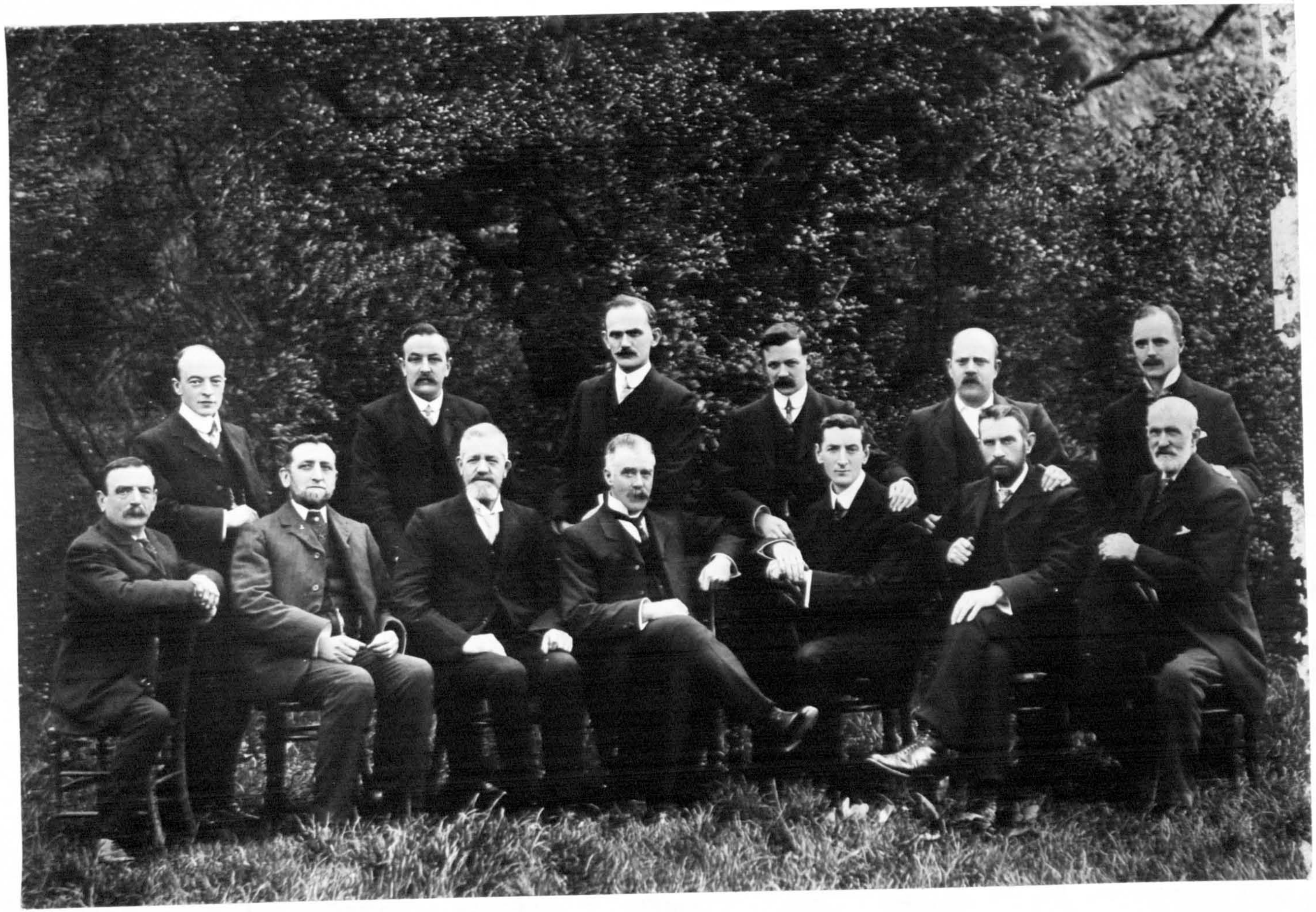
1. Committee Minutes, Castleford Society, 19th February, 1917.
2. Committee fees worked out on average at 3d a meeting with the treasurer and secretary being paid in one lump sum(£5 to £10) at the end of a trading period.



MYTHOLMROYD SOCIETY - 1911 JUBILEE COMMITTEE AND OFFICERS

Back Row: Henry Helliwell, Thomas Grace, William Dewhirst (Treasurer), William Brearley, Jesse Riley, George Stevenson

Front Row: John Howarth, Fred Smith, James Farrar (Secretary), Seth Johnson (President), Charles Helliwell (Manager), Thomas Morgan, David Helliwell

Thomas Morgan was the son-in-law of Henry Thomas a pioneer of the society, he had joined the board in 1896, being president for 10 years between 1897-1906; David Helliwell again had a record going back into the nineteenth century, having joined the board in 1888. Thus this ordinary photograph shows a continuity of leadership with at least half a dozen members having between them nearly 70 years experience in the nineteenth century, and if one includes predecessors the figure would exceed 100 years. Another significant factor associated with long service is the high level of participation in even this small society. Twelve committeemen plus an education committee and a handful of staff far exceeded the commitment in human terms of a correspondingly sized private shop where a father and son, and a couple of staff would have been the norm. The chance to participate in the local co-operative society was a significant cause of co-operative development, the opportunity to serve was real and encouraged.

The close band of fellowship, total commitment, trust and pride in their society is nowhere better shown than in a letter of resignation submitted to the committee of the Mytholmroyd society in 1935 by Charles Helliwell.[1] Helliwell the society manager, who was not a member of the committee, but a central figure in the management structure, had joined the society in 1892:

> "Dear Sirs
>
> I beg to hand you my resignation as General Manager and Secretary of our Society, the same to terminate when you have appointed my successor. Looking back over a period of 43 years I have seen many changes, and am pleased to be able to report steady progress over this period.
>
> I well remember starting work on a Monday morning in January 1892. My first job was cutting and wrapping 3lb bars of soap and after that weighing a bag of soda. Mr. Worsick was General Manager at the time, but he served in the Drapery Dept. (now the hardware). In addition to the Drapery he sold practically all the patent medicines. Mr. Worsick left to manage Colne society in August 1893 and

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1. No date recorded on letter. This letter is now in the possession of the author.

Mr. Robinson was appointed Manager, he having been previously First Counterman in the Grocery Dept. Mr. Robinson left in September 1894 and Mr. H. Wadsworth, who had been at Brearley, appointed, Jas. Greenwood was sent to Brearley and I got a push up, now being second hand behind the counter. The trade at this time was between £7,000 and £8,000 per half year and the membership between 500 and 600. Mr. Wadsworth left for health reasons and went to New Zealandwhere he still resides. The position was now advertised and I tried for the job along with about 40 others, the shop being full of men from all parts of the country, one trying who lived at the [unreadable]. There was great excitement at the time and it was some time before a decision was arrived at, anyhow they gave me the job. I was just over 24 years of age and for some time after I wished I had not got it, in fact, I don't think I should have tried but I was afraid of showing the white feather. Just before this the Society had purchased Royal Fold Estate (in 1899) for £1,805 and in 1903 the left hand side of the fold and a strip of land was sold to the Railway Co. for £1,900, a further strip has since been sold to the Co. This estate turned out well for the society, as we still have some good property as well as some land. The following year 1904 the property across the road was purchased from Mr. Rushworth, he had been out of business for a few years and the shop was let to Mr. Angus Sutcliffe (Tailor). The next move was to transfer the Drapery across the road leaving the boots, oilcloth and matting, to this was added pots, pans, brushes and other hardware from the Grocery Dept. The first half year's sales in the Hardware was £387 and the total sales for the half year £8,267. The membership was about 600. The next move was the purchase of the Oddfellows property in 1913 for £482.0.0. This club had got into low water and the society had a mortgage on the property, they carried on for some time but eventually had to realise. Mr. Farrar and Mr. Dewhurst who were both members of 'the Club' managed to sell to the Committee and Mr. Dewhurst paid the Oddfellows from our office one Saturday afternoon, each party coming from various districts for their proportion of the price. It was decided then to make the Hall into the Reading Room and Gamesroom and the old Reading room was pulled down and the present flour room built, after completion the steps were removed from the shop and new fixtures put in making it smarter and more modern. I think all will be aware of the purchase of Midgley Road Branch from the Exors of the late

Helliwell Robertshaw, bereavement followed quickly in this family and the Exors approached the society with a view to selling, it was decided to do so and it was certainly a step in the right direction, a few years later Scout Road was built and in 1933 amalgamation with the Cragg Vale took place.

I have not mentioned the blocks of cottage property built by the society, this was built before my time and with the exception of Oxford and Eton Terrace, these had been completed when I was appointed Manager, but were empty with about one exception. I think they were boycotted as the rent was considered too high, 4/6 per week for Oxford and 4/- per week Eton, eventually the price was reduced 6d per week and they were soon taken up, these have since been all sold but they stand as a monument to the society for good substantial workmanship. Looking back, I have had many painful duties to perform, but I think the pleasures outweigh them. I shall certainly miss the companionship of the committee meetings. I have no particular plans for the future but hope to have a few trips out during the coming summer, wishing all prosperity to the society and that you will be successful in appointing a good man as my successor.

I remain yours respectfully

C.Helliwell"

Charles Helliwell was not untypical in nineteenth century or indeed twentieth century co-operative circles, when it came to service and commitment. Becoming the senior official at an early age and remaining until retirement was quite common.[1] He clearly was not merely employed by a trading concern, his brief encompassed a multitude of services ranging from housing provision to educational facilities. The companionship of the committee meetings and his references to "our society" show the strong emotional tie that existed, which when combined with the economic aspects of co-operative trading, helped to create such a strong hold on communities throughout the county.

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1. This still happens in many small societies.

The composition of committees reflected local conditions, with miners being well represented in mining communities and weavers being influential in communities such as Mytholmroyd. In Barnsley early committees contained colliers, warehousemen, a weaver, a foreman in an iron foundry, a manager of a linen factory and a linen bleacher. In Leeds the Board composition was more middle class containing such notable people as Sir Edwin Gaunt (see photograph) a hat, cap and clothing manufacturer, William Bell a manager of a bolt and screw factory, and John Holmes who had his own successful drapery business. In Harrogate early presidents included a builder and contractor, cabinet maker, railwayman, postman and newsagent.[1] A.W. Leeming, President between 1897-1900 and 1901-1902, became a postman in 1882, rising to become the Inspector of Telegraph Messengers in 1908. A keen promoter of thrift and a member of the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows, he was also a keen trade unionist. C.H. Day was President of the society in 1908, and an estate agent by profession. He was a "earnest" Rechabite, treasurer of the Band of Hope and a superintendent of the Sunday School at the Congregational Church. Any detailed list of committee members shows that people from many diverse backgrounds took an active part in helping to direct the affairs of their local society.

The introductory chapter has made certain conjectures about the motives and attitudes of members, especially the leaders. But we should not forget that the community in which a society developed was also very important. The community provided a real impetus, with the society attracting support from all sections of the population. Craig Calhoun has in fact correctly argued that community provides a more solid basis for mobilizing people for collective action than does class, and that an appreciation of this fact by historians would reshape the histories they write.[2] This viewpoint is certainly supported by this research. A community consensus in favour of local societies was a very important element in the development and growth of the Yorkshire Co-operative Movement.

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1. Appendix 7-1 gives a detailed list of Presidents and Committeemen of the Harrogate and District Society.

2. R.S. Neale (ed), History and Class: Essential Readings in Theory and Interpretation, (Oxford, 1983). Article entitled "Community: Toward a Viable conceptualization for Comparative Research".

SIR EDWIN GAUNT, SECRETARY OF LEEDS SOCIETY, 1850-53

CREDIT PROVISION

Bonner when discussing the principle of cash trading stated

> "... Inquiry into the reasons for holding the principle reveal not only the desire to maintain the financial soundness of the societies but also as an essential basis for "equalising profits" (Charles Howarth) and to favour the character and well-being of the members. Co-operators in those days regarded indebtedness as one of the great social and political evils. A man in debt was not a free man and freeing and keeping the working classes from debt was necessary to their emancipation".[1]

Similarly, Jeffreys states

> "the Retail Societies aimed at market prices, and as a matter of principle cash had to be paid for the goods, no credit being allowed".[2]

The above statements clearly echo the orthodox view held by economic historians on the important subject of credit provision. However, the available evidence from the nineteenth century sources points to a very different conclusion and that in the post-Rochdale Movement the vast majority of societies gave credit and in doing so perpetuated a system that went back many centuries. Indeed, it must be recognised that a policy of flexible credit, administered under a carefully regulated formula, did not hold back the infant Movement, whereas a rigid adherence to cash trading might have had harmful effects and not attracted the working classes in large numbers.

Early returns to the Registrar relating to Industrial and Provident societies indicated that when asked if credit was given the following result emerged:

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1. A. Bonner, British Co-operation, (Manchester, 1961), p 309.
2. J.B. Jeffreys, Retail Trading in Britain 1850-1950, (Cambridge, 1954), p 17.

	Credit Given	No Credit Given	% Giving Credit
1862	45	18	71.4%
1865	61	29	67.7%

[1]

This pattern was noted even earlier in an 1860 article dealing with co-operative societies

> "some of them hold inflexibly, like the Rochdale model, to cash payments, whilst others give credit to members to the extent of one-half, two-thirds or three-fourths of the paid up capital of the debtor".[2]

In Leeds the Flour Mill society retailed their flour through agents who owned their own shops and sold other basic commodities. Many of their customers had what were termed "shots" or credit scores with the flour agents and thus could not take their custom elsewhere. This system of credit meant that when the Leeds Flour Mill society decided to enter into the provisions market many of their members were so indebted to flour agents that they could not give their full support to the new venture.

There was at the time a very strong belief that the Rochdale model was in force. A case involving credit sales was heard at Halifax County Court in 1887 and reported at length in the pages of the Co-operative News:

> "The Wainstalls society had sued one of their members (Mr. Smith) for the non payment of £5 7s 6d for goods supplied. The manager of the society appeared before Judge Snagge Wright and proved the debt which was not disputed. He indicated that the member had been allowed to obtain articles on credit "from time to time". The following questioning took place:-

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1. Returns of the General Statements of the funds and effects of Industrial and Provident Societies registered under the Act 25 and 26 Vic, for years ending 31st December 1862 and 31st December 1865

2. Patricia Hollis (ed), Class and Conflict in Nineteenth Century England 1815-1850, item 18b "Co-operative Societies" Meliora, iv. 1860, pp 314-315.

LEEDS SOCIETY'S FIRST FLOUR AGENTS SHOP

STOCKS HILL, BRAMLEY OPENED 1847

Judge Snagge Wright: "I always understood that one of the first principles of Co-operative societies is that they deal for ready money".

Manager: "We generally require ready money payments but we have some customers who are outdoor workers, and they cannot always pay".

Judge Snagge Wright: "Is not that rather hard upon those who pay cash down".

Manager: "Well in our district the habit of customers keeping a book has gone on for generations and some time will be necessary to break the old system of credit down".

Judge Snagge Wright: "Although in the present case the defendant has been almost always behind with the society he has shared the bonus. That seems to be very much like putting a premium on debt".[1]

The judge ordered Mr. Smith to repay the money by instalments of 2 shillings per month. The case did again highlight the difficulties of changing old established customs. Another area of concern centred on the payment of interest on share capital even when a member owed the society money, based on a formula involving the same share capital. The practice of allowing members to receive credit in proportion to their share capital was practised by many societies. Shopmen would often be instructed that before letting any goods go out of the shop on credit they must firstly ascertain the amount of share capital that person held in a society e.g. if a member held £8 in share capital, and if the rules allowed credit to 3/4 of the value of the capital holding, then a member could have £6 in credit. Failure to pay back the money could result in a society taking certain punitive steps such as withholding the payment of dividend, debts could be written off a member's capital holdings or an interest charge on outstanding debts could be levied.

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1. Co-operative News, 5th February 1887, p 129.

Minute books[1] show that societies did closely monitor this aspect of trading policy and one such entry involving the Loftus society shows:

> "that the capital of the following members be transferred in sufficient quantity to settle shop debts under power of Rule 13a viz. Margt Lyson £1.0.0, Jas Morrison 17/-, Alice Morby 15/4, Henry Payne £3.0.2, Wm. Verrele £3.19.3½, Jerimiah Kitchens £1.0.0, Johnson Patton £1.0.0, Thomas Wood £1.1.9, Thos Duck £1.11.3, Corrie Cumberland 14/5, Geo. Mays 15/2, Benjamin Payn £1.0.0, Thomas Yeardon 12/4."[2]

Table One shows the findings of returns submitted to the Co-operative Union for selected years between 1881-1900. £23,596 was owed to societies in 1881 by their members and this figure had increased to £72,847 by 1900. The money owed to societies expressed as a percentage to sales, shows a gradual increase over the twenty year period from 0.66% to 0.79%. When analysing these findings on a district basis, Huddersfield and Airedale are consistently higher than the others, with the Huddersfield district recording a percentage figure in 1900 of 1.78%. Table One shows recorded levels of credit at the end of a particular trading period but it must be recognised that at earlier times during the year these levels could have been much higher. Shop managers probably gave credit without the approval of the management committee and as long as accounts had been settled prior to stock taking then this unofficial system could not be detected. Like all such ad hoc arrangements little evidence has survived on this issue.

The reasons why credit levels were higher in the Huddersfield district are difficult to explain. Huddersfield was one of the earliest centres of co-operative activity and it has already been noted in Chapter Two that extensive credit contributed towards the decline of the pre-Rochdale Movement. It would be difficult to change the habits

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1. All minute books investigated record this kind of information e.g. Leeds, Castleford, Grosmont, York, Mytholmroyd, Loftus, Altofts.

2. Minute 9, Loftus Society, March 25th, 1884.

TABLE ONE CREDIT LEVELS - YORKSHIRE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

	YORKSHIRE		Calderdale		Dewsbury		East Yorkshire		North Riding		Airedale		Huddersfield		South Yorkshire	
Year	Money Owing	Expressed as % of Trade	Money Owing	% of Trade	Money Owing	% of Trade	Money Owing	% of Trade	Money Owing	% of Trade	Money Owing	% of Trade	Money Owing	% of Trade	Money Owing	% of Trade
1881	23,596	0.66														
1882	29,009	0.78														
1883	32,018	0.77														
1895	43,013	0.67	3,801	0.37	3,211	0.25	2,079	2.22	2,061	0.94	12,854	0.66	12,901	1.63	6,106	0.58
1896	46,852	0.67	4,262	0.39	4,303	0.32	524	0.43	1,677	0.66	16,983	0.80	12,112	1.44	6,991	0.58
1897	52,025	0.68	3,906	0.34	5,471	0.38	640	0.44	1,957	0.63	20,581	0.86	13,218	1.49	6,252	0.46
1898	62,153	0.93	4,838	0.41	5,506	0.38	601	0.35	2,284	0.66	26,980	1.05	14,661	1.60	7,283	0.50
1899	72,409	0.85	5,109	0.42	6,569	0.44	675	0.33	2,514	0.68	31,752	1.18	16,399	1.72	9,391	0.60
1900	72,847	0.79	5,218	0.42	5,582	0.38	1,745	0.45	2,900	0.71	27,666	0.92	17,492	1.78	12,244	0.71

Source: Congress Reports, 1880-1901

and customs of a lifetime, so that to keep credit down to such low levels could be regarded as a feather in the cap for the post-Rochdale Movement. The great difference between credit given at the co-operative and credit given by private retailers was that the co-operative system did not drag a person into a position of dependence but allowed an accommodation for those with insufficient funds based on a prior financial commitment in the form of share capital. A working class solution to the credit problem had been reached, occasionally needing policing, but which certainly assisted the Movement in the early formative years of development and growth.

BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES

> "Learn to Labour for Yourself,
> Ye who have been so long down trodden;
> create not for another wealth
> That he may shine, and you - forgotten
>
> Learn to know that Labour only is the
> source of all true wealth;
> What you want is only knowledge
> How to use it for yourselves".[1]

The early pioneers through the pages of their journals and newspapers had expressed a desire to change the existing economic and social structure of English society. This tradition was carried on by later generations of co-operators who recognised the need to express their view with moderation but pride:

> "Our mission is to combine the energies of the Labouring classes for the realisation of the great object - to remedy the glaring inequalities of our own social state. This we seek to accomplish - not by dragging down the aristocratic and monied classes to our level, ours is no scheme of spoilation - but by raising ourselves to that position in the scale of being to which as men and as brethren, we justly belong".[2]

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1. The Co-operator, January 1861, p 119, "A poem from Heckmondwike".
2. The Co-operator, August 1860, p 49, Editorial Comment.

The early Yorkshire co-operators were not attempting to secure the whole product of Labour but in obtaining a fair day's wage for a fair day's work. It was recognised that there was a need to regulate the business of buying, exercise thoughtfulness and common sense, and that by becoming prudent members of society then the extension of the franchise could be obtained. By the accumulation of wealth and experience they were establishing a legitimate economic and social claim to political representation.

E.V. Neale was one of the most important theorists in the post-Rochdale period. His association with the Christian Socialists in the 1840s and 1850s, the drafting of Industrial and Provident Acts and his secretarial duties with the Co-operative Union, placed him in a position of considerable influence and responsibility. The Co-operative Movement like other radical groupings was a mixture of classes, there being a strong tradition of class collaboration within a predominantly non-socialist ideology in favour of maintaining property rights and against economic levelling. Neale did not favour the Owenite brand of socialism. He agreed that socialism and co-operation had a common aim in providing a more satisfactory state of affairs in regard to the production, distribution and the enjoyment of wealth. However, Neale felt that co-operation desired to uphold the principle of individuality while socialism sought to eradicate it. Throughout the century there were many inside and outside the Movement who were uneasy concerning Owenite doctrines as they related to Co-operation. The Earl of Rosebery in his 1890 Congress address felt confident enough to state:

> "It is not so many years since the movements of a social character, or a socialist character, were regarded as anathema maranatha. Fourier, St. Simon, and Owen were words of ill-omen and ill savour in the eyes and nostrils of the country. But now the case is widely altered. Society sees that it can pull down what it sees objectionable in these experiments to a reducible minimum, and that it can welcome all the rest".[1]

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1. Congress Report, 1890, p 7 - Inaugural Address.

This gradual approach was also recognised by the economist Alfred Marshall at the 1889 Congress when he stated that:

> "The co-operative faith is a belief in the beauty and the nobility, the strength and the efficiency, of collective action by the working classes, employing their own means not indeed suddenly to revolutionize, but gradually to raise their own material and moral condition".[1]

The co-operative belief in the establishment of self-supporting home colonies was, in the second half of the century only rarely discussed in co-operative circles. The advocates of producer Co-operation who included Neale, lost ground to the forceful breed of co-operators from working class backgrounds. Men like J.T. Mitchell, Chairman of the C.W.S., extolled the practical benefits of Co-operation:

> "What I want is for co-operators, trade unionists, and all the industrious classes of this and every other countries to combine in keeping their own shop, making a good dividend producing, distributing, and financing, and let all the profits come to those who consume the goods, because they have made them".[2]

Although there were differences regarding the direction in which the Movement should go it was evidently clear that Co-operation was a concept that evoked a mainly favourable response from the rulers of society. The list of Congress Presidents, Table Two, is extremely impressive, containing the aristocracy, academics, politicians and churchmen.

Societies throughout the country could be reasonably certain that a leading member of the community, or a local Member of Parliament, would make themselves available at society events. W.E. Forster MP was a keen supporter of the Bradford society and would often chair meetings like the one held at St. George's Hall, Bradford in January

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1. Congress Report, 1889, p 5, Inaugural Address.
2. Congress Report, 1892, p 2, Inaugural Address.

TABLE TWO CO-OPERATIVE CONGRESSES AND PRESIDENTS 1869-1900

Year	Where Held	President	Number of Delegates
1869	London ...	*T. Hughes MP	107
1870	Manchester ...	*W. Morrison MP	109
1871	Birmingham ...	*Hon. Aub. Herbert MP ...	113
1872	Bolton ...	*T. Hughes MP	183
1873	Newcastle-upon-Tyne	*Joseph Cowen Jun	199
1874	Halifax ...	*Thomas Brassey MP	189
1875	London ...	*Professor T. Rogers ...	114
1876	Glasgow ...	*Professor Caird	116
1877	Leicester ...	*Hon.Aub. Herbert MP ...	162
1878	Manchester ...	*Marquis of Ripon	273
1879	Gloucester ...	*Professor Stuart	131
1880	Newcastle-upon-Tyne	*Bishop of Durham	174
1881	Leeds ...	*Lord Derby	310
1882	Oxford ...	*Lord Reay	294
1883	Edinburgh ...	*Rt.Hon. W.E. Baxter MP ...	394
1884	Derby ...	*Sedley Taylor MA	454
1885	Oldham ...	*Lloyd Jones	578
1886	Plymouth ...	*Earl of Morley	406
1887	Carlisle ...	*G.J. Holyoake	464
1888	Dewsbury ...	*E.V. Neale	581
1889	Ipswich ...	*Professor A. Marshall ...	435
1890	Glasgow ...	*Earl of Rosebery	654
1891	Lincoln ...	*A.H.D. Ackland MP	580
1892	Rochdale ...	*J.T.W. Mitchell JP	871
1893	Bristol ...	*Councillor G. Hawkins ...	645
1894	Sunderland ...	*T. Tweddell JP	722
1895	Huddersfield	*George Thomson	849

* President only on first day of Congress

Source: Congress Report, 1900.

TABLE TWO CO-OPERATIVE CONGRESSES AND PRESIDENTS 1869-1900

Year	Where Held	President	Number of Delegates
1896	Woolwich ...	B. Jones	900
1897	Perth ...	Wm. Maxwell JP	1,000
1898	Peterborough	D. McInnes	932
1899	Liverpool ...	F. Hardern JP	1,205
1900	Cardiff ...	W.H. Brown	1,027

Source: Congress Report, 1900.

1885 to celebrate the "Silver Wedding" of the Bradford Co-operative Society. Forster was able to give the audience a detailed progress report on the society and he commented that:

> "One great success of the Movement was that it had been a spontaneous, self helping Movement amongst the working people, who had been independent of anything like patronage".[1]

The Vicar of Mytholmroyd Mr. Baldwin opening a new store of the local society said:

> "the care of men for their own welfare and accumulation of property - the having, as it was called, a stake in the country was just ground for their claiming an extension of political power, and though a conservative he would willingly grant such men votes because he believed they would use them for the maintenance of our time honoured institutions".[2]

There was trust for this new Movement based on trading success and moderate aspirations and hence never any need to instigate any governmental enquiry. The returns of the Registrar showed an impressive record of progress with societies always being prepared to assist an ailing neighbour in the interests of the wider Movement. This careful and responsible pattern of development with committees answerable to regular and searching members' meetings ensured that a moderate and middle of the road path was followed.

There was one form of opposition, indeed vilification, that the Movement had to contend with and this came from a sector of the community that did suffer economically from the establishment of the retail Co-operative Movement, namely private shopkeepers. The opening of co-operative shops must have shaken the very foundations of the private retail trade, especially the small independent retailers.

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1. Co-operative News, 7th February, 1885, p 119.
2. The Co-operator, 1st May, 1865, p 7.

It was not long before private traders tried to disrupt supplies by pressing wholesalers not to supply co-operatives with goods. A meeting of the Hoyland Highway Board held on Thursday 12th June 1884 shows the level of hostility towards 'the Co-operative' from one particular trader. The meeting was held to consider plans for a new co-operative store at Hoyland Common and a member of the Board named Smith objected to the plans saying he would:

> "never vote for one of these things. I have been in business 30 years, and now a lot of blooming colliers must come and set up in opposition. I shall vote for them to go to Jericho".[1]

Despite Mr. Smith's objections the committee accepted the plans. Many similar examples can be found in the pages of the Co-operative News and local newspapers. However it was the grocery trade's own trade journal The Grocer that the main broadside against the co-operatives was launched. The Grocer constantly claimed that amongst the co-operative stores there were:

> "very many failures and very few successes" and "Amongst the drawbacks to success may be mentioned the little army of itinerant lecturers and social gatherings".[2]

These attacks, which more often than not centred on the societies' social aspirations, did not gain any noticeable backing. Politicians, as indicated earlier, were more interested in the practical benefits that co-operatives bestowed on their constituents and society in general than in any narrow pressure group disturbed by a new entrant that had improved shopping facilities and was in accord with those Victorian virtues of thrift and self help.

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1. Co-operative News, 28th June, 1884, p 591.
2. The Grocer, 17th July, 1893, p 6.

RELIGION

> "It is very gratifying to know that co-operation has been so largely and successfully taken up. I was a solitary Pioneer in the beginning and earned the then ill favoured, but now enviable title of a visionary. My visions consisted in the faith that some day the moral principles of Christ would admit of being carried out practically, as they are in a true co-operative society. The honest everyday virtues recommended throughout the Gospel are the foundation of family life and co-operation. People must be industrious, honest and saving. I look forward to co-operative schools of industrious training, and co-operative colonisation in due time. With proper training, there ought not to be a pauper in England. She has land enough all over the world for ten times her population. The capital wasted in strikes would have made every man a gentleman if properly employed. But enough".[1]

This practical statement by Dr. William King, 30 years after the publication of The Co-operator ceased shows how important religion was to him and indeed to many of the early co-operators. The family was regarded simultaneously as an institution sanctioned by and embodying the Christian faith and the basic building block of social stability. Respectability was a value that did in fact embrace a cluster of attitudes including thrift, self-help and independence. Improvement was closely linked to respectability, a notion of the progressive intellectual and moral development of the individual. Religious beliefs were central to the establishment of a new economic and social order and this was shown in Chapter Two when looking at men like Thomas Hirst. The post-Rochdale Movement carried on this strong tradition with a large non-conformist base. Obituaries and Jubilee histories show the important role played by non-conformists in the development of the Co-operative Movement in Yorkshire.

In Mytholmroyd comprehensive membership records coupled with church and chapel registers have enabled a thorough survey to be carried out. The village contained an Anglican church and Wesleyan and Primitive

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1. The Co-operator, February, 1864, p 130.

Methodist chapels and it is clear that all denominations played a significant part in the shaping of the local co-operative society. The three most important positions within the first committee of management - secretary, treasurer and chairman - were held by men of the different religious persuasions and this pattern is repeated at committee level and ordinary member level. Although by far the smallest denomination, the Primitive Methodists played a disproportionately large role in the society with two of the first eight presidents coming from within their ranks. This development would follow the observations set out by Hobsbawm, that the methodists of the smaller seceding sects had an influence out of all proportion to their members in the leadership and organisation of the political and industrial working class movements.[1]

It was amongst the Wesleyans, however, that the society seems to have gained most numerical support. A sample of 93 members[2] in 1871 shows that at least 28 were known Wesleyans, together with 3 out of the first 8 presidents, and this domination was found in the membership of the various committees. These findings show that the management of the society was dominated by Wesleyan Methodists and that a large percentage of the membership were non-conformist.[3] This conclusion will not surprise many social historians, but what is significant is that the society received considerable support from Anglicans, and also vocal and moral support from the first vicar of Mytholmroyd, the Rev. William Baldwin (see photograph). It must be recognised that there had been a revival of the anglican church in the twenty years after the Reform Act, and Perkin observed

> "the remarkable if unsuccessful attempt to re-establish itself as the church of the whole nation, at least in the educational field".[4]

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1. E.J. Hobsbawm, Labouring Men, (1968) p 26.
2. Sample as used in Mytholmroyd, Chapter Six.
3. No chapel membership lists have survived. These members have been traced in burial registers (deaths of members or their children) and thus do not include all Wesleyans e.g. some moved and were buried elsewhere, some lived well into the twentieth century.
4. H. Perkin, The Origins of Modern English Society 1780-1850, (1969), p 361.

THE REV. WILLIAM BALDWIN FIRST VICAR OF ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH

MYTHOLMROYD

The Church of England through the prompting of the Christian Socialists was helping to transform the state's attitude towards working class organisations from hostility to cautious benevolence.

Though the working classes were not won back in large numbers by the church many of them at least ceased to regard it with hostility. Dean Hook talking of the link between the Yorkshire factory reformers and the Christian Socialists wrote to F.D. Maurice in 1860:

> "the great good done by yourself and Co., is this, that the working classes have learned to consider christians and churchmen, what they are, their friends ... Three and thirty years ago we were regarded with hatred. It is very different now - at least in Yorkshire. The step our generation has made is this. The working classes respect Christianity, though they stand aloof and only a few of them come to church, but they readily hand over to us the next generation for education"[1]

The position of the established church in Mytholmroyd evidently accorded well with Perkin's observation. Anglican education provision made a significant impact on village life, and two of the first Sunday school superintendents, Michael Worsick and Jim Gledhill, were very active co-operators. The Rev. Baldwin did not appear to be very high church and this factor could well have been an additional reason why the Church of England gained popular support within the village and the co-operative society. One sizeable religious pressure group in the village was the Orange Order, a body that also contained some leading village co-operators. A report in the Todmorden Times shows that the Lodge attended a service at St. Michael's which was described as being

> "conducted in plain, simple, scriptural manner in accordance with the formation of the Church of England ... rendered energetic and faithful by the minister in the pulpit, that is what we wish to see in every church in England".[2]

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1. J.F.F. Harrison, The Early Victorians, 1832-51, (1971), p 161.
2. Saturday, 14th October, 1865, p 1.

All denominations seem to have contributed towards the development of the co-operative society in Mytholmroyd, as they did with other bodies that existed in the community.[1] It is an indication of their common bond that the Mytholmroyd co-operators would not countenance any favouritism towards any of the denominations.

> "We cannot make a grant towards the new organ for Brearley chapel seeing that our membership is composed of members belonging to all various denominations of the village".[2]

This did not mean that the society shunned contact with the various religious groups within the village, on the contrary it practised a policy of continuous open intercourse including those of a non-religious kind. The co-operative was an organisation that was open to everyone and designed for the benefit of everyone. This socially useful institution with its varied class basis was therefore accepted fully into Victorian society. Co-operation as expressed in Mytholmroyd and many other towns and villages, did not advance an abstract doctrine, it offered people another way of coming together, a unity that would see many gaining materially and many others being made aware of the wider issues that faced them both locally and nationally. Co-operation brought people together from all sections of the community, and was indeed a microcosm of that community. Co-operative leaders recognised the fact that man was a conservative animal whose ideas were imprisoned within a framework not easily abandoned. But given those constraints the Movement seized on the tradition of working-class mutuality and collective self-help and the prosperity of the Victorian economy. Their beliefs and attitudes shaped a democratic structure that proved the fitness of the ordinary man to have a stake in the way his country was run. Even though the Movement gave credit this also reflected a working-class solution to a problem that could be accommodated within a flexible framework that took note of local conditions and individual circumstances.

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1. T. Brennan, E.W. Cooney and H. Pollins, Social Change in South West Wales (1954), Chapter 4, "The Function of Organised Religion" found that the religious denominations as a whole were closely linked to the cultural and recreational life of the area, the tone of which was greatly influenced by their attitude.

2. Committee Meeting, 1st September 1881, Resolution 2.

The Co-operative Movement established in a particular area did not flourish just because its merchandise met the requirements of the consumer but because they located themselves firmly in the minds of the people - it was the shop of the people in that area. The co-operative identified a need in its local community and set out to fulfil that need.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE EFFECTS OF CO-OPERATIVE GROWTH

Cause and effect are often difficult to separate, not just in a study of co-operative growth but in any analysis and in any discipline. An environment in which beliefs and attitudes are firmly established coupled with the appropriate legal framework and modes of operation - both democratic and practical - must be regarded as the main causes of co-operative growth. When turning to the effects of that growth some of the earlier points are reinforced and others expanded. What is clear however is that after 1850 the working class ideology did become more inward-looking, a class consciousness that provided no stimulus to action on the same scale of the 1830's and 1840's, whose practical expression was found in the creation of distinct working class institutions and localised struggles against some of the effects of capitalism on workers and consumers. The wider aspirations of Co-operation became less prominent, with increased concentration on business-like retailing and financial stability.

The effects of this growth can best be shown when looking at the establishment of the federal organisations - the Wholesale Societies and the Co-operative Union, co-operative production, educational provision and social welfare. These areas show the depth and vitality of working-class culture, its autonomy and its essentially communal and egalitarian character. At the same time there is permanent tension within the Movement between the potential and the practical. In so far as the practical almost inevitably swamps the ideal, like an ageing prize-fighter, the Movement had increased its weight in capital and members but had surrendered its youthful enthusiasm.

FEDERAL ORGANISATIONS

The need to establish central agencies in order to consolidate and then expand the co-operative sector was a major area of debate as the century entered its second half. Co-ordinated action had been a working-class response to problems faced for generations and the establishment of a central buying organisation and ideological underpinning

from the Co-operative Union were the two institutional forms introduced in the 1860's. Legislative reforms relating to Industrial and Provident societies allowed the Movement the machinery that was necessary for independent growth and development. The pre-Rochdale Movement was unco-ordinated, devoid of a common philosophy and doomed to failure. The post-Rochdale Movement showed that only by united action could freedom of expression be achieved and growth ensured.

The Co-operative Wholesale Society Ltd.

In Chapter Two reference has already been made to the establishment of an unsuccessful wholesaling organisation in the pre-Rochdale period. This early attempt failed mainly due to lack of support - support in fact only coming from the Huddersfield and Halifax societies. The late 1840's and 1850's witnessed the establishment of many societies in the industrial areas of England and Scotland. These small, often isolated societies, each trading in their own particular areas, bore the full brunt of competition from the private retailers. This pattern of development worried many leading co-operators and one answer to this problem was felt to lie in the establishment of a wholesaling organisation able to buy in bulk at much more favourable terms than could be obtained by the individual actions of many autonomous societies. The economies derived from bulk buying would, it was felt, be passed on to societies and then down to individual members. Another unsuccessful attempt to establish a wholesale agency can be recorded in the early 1850's, this time involving the Rochdale society. This idea was still in the minds of many co-operators but it was not until a Christmas day meeting held in Rochdale in 1861, between societies from Yorkshire and Lancashire that any further progress was made. Delegates recognised that the 1862 Act would allow the establishment of a wholesale society on a federal basis and that societies should therefore establish a wholesale depot as soon as the Act was passed by Parliament. The effects of legislative changes were obviously in the thoughts of many co-operators at this time and conferences were held up and down the country in order to discuss plans and to seek the necessary level of

support required if the scheme was not to founder as on the previous two occasions.

On April 3rd 1863, a conference meeting in the Public Hall, Kirby Street, Canal Street, Ancoats, Manchester resolved that a Wholesale Agency and Depot Society be established.[1] The rules were registered in August 1863 as the North of England Co-operative Wholesale Industrial Provident Society Limited.[2] Individual societies joining this newly formed federal organisation were required to take up a share for every one of their members, the shares being five shillings each. Within weeks fourteen thousand shares had been subscribed by 43 societies - thirty of these were in Lancashire and six in Yorkshire. One of the founders of the CWS, William Nutall[3] described the advantages of the wholesale society at the 1869 Co-operative Congress

> "It enables the smallest retail stores to buy the best quality of goods, and at as cheap a rate as the largest, whose experience has in some societies been very dearly bought. The knowledge possessed by many a buyer has been acquired through the honest mode of dealing adopted by the Wholesale; hence it is the means of preventing failure, and facilitating success. No society need keep large stocks, unless it chooses to speculate, because it can buy small quantities as cheaply as large, interest on capital is saved, less warehouse room is required, and fewer losses by goods becoming unsaleable incurred. Instead of societies sending their managers to market,as formerly, the greater part of the business is conducted by letter. In fact, whatever benefits the retail stores confer on their members, by supplying pure and cheap articles on daily consumption this federation aims at conferring on retail stores".[4]

This statement, practical in tone, shows the egalitarian policy adopted by the CWS in that the small society could buy as cheaply as the large

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1. Good Friday
2. This long name was changed to the Co-operative Wholesale Society in 1873.
3. Nuttall was a pioneer of the federal organisations.
4. Processing of the Co-operative Congress, 1869, p 42

irrespective of the quantities purchased. The spreading of risks with centralised buying in the hands of professionals enabled societies, even the smallest, to compete effectively with the largest private retailers. Legislative changes referred to in the previous chapter had a great effect on the fortunes of the Movement.

Co-operative Union Ltd.

In the twenty five years following the formation of the Rochdale society, co-operative growth, as one would expect, was parochial in character. However absorbing local problems were, there was a need to tackle the larger issues facing the Movement such as legal difficulties, the holding and transfer of land, co-operative production, educational provision etc., which could not be solved by any one society but needed central organisation and control.[1] The tendency to convene conferences, such as the Lancashire and Yorkshire Conference Committee, in order to take concerted action for co-operative advancement was certainly a step in the right direction, but a more permanent organisation was felt to be needed. Coupled with this desire was a recognition of the need to convene, as in the 1830's, a regular and annual Co-operative Congress. At these gatherings, it was felt there should be an exchange of ideas and information and plans for the future promotion of co-operative ideals and principles.

On 28th August 1868, at the rooms of the Agricultural and Horticultural Association, No 29 Parliament Street, Westminster, a meeting of "gentlemen interested in co-operative undertakings" was held under the presidency of E.V. Neale. This meeting resolved to hold a Congress the following year and invite

> "Co-operative societies of Production, both at home and abroad, to send samples of their respective manufactures to the Congress for exhibition"[2]

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1. Chapter three pp 121-2 has shown the advice and guidance given by the Rochdale society to new and emerging societies. This advice was essential to growth but even the Rochdale society recognised the need to establish a central advisory body to perform this difficult task.

2. Proceedings of the London Co-operative Congress, 1869, p 5.

The first modern Congress was held in London between 31st May and 3rd June 1869 and Mr. Tom Hughes MP presided and delivered the inaugural address. Support for this Congress came from many different quarters and the Congress Arrangements Committee included amongst others, Mr. A.J. Mundella MP, Walter Morrison MP, E.O. Greening, W.A. Allan (Secretary of the Amalgamated Engineers Union), R. Applegarth (Secretary of Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners), Rev. J.H. Gandy (Rector, Warwick), Abraham Greenwood, (President of the North of England Wholesale Society), Hon. Auberon Herbert, John Holmes, and James Hole (Leeds Co-operative Society), George Jacob Holyoake, Dr. Max Hirsch (Member of North German Parliament, Berlin), Professor W.S. Jevons (Owens College, Manchester), Rev. Charles Kingsley (Cambridge University), J.M. Ludlow, E.V. Neale, John Ruskin MA and John Stuart Mill.[1] Not only was this Congress attracting support from known co-operators and leaders of the new model trade unions, but the varied class basis of the Movement is again visible together with a strong international influence. Co-operatives had achieved a position of respectability and there was little need for those associated with this Congress to request anonymity as was the case at pre-Rochdale gatherings. Confidence in the propriety of the co-operative cause is shown by the support given by J.S. Mill. Although John Stuart Mill was unable to attend Congress he did send the committee a letter pledging his support:

> "I am not only willing, but desirous, to give my name as a supporter of the Movement and as fully approving of the Congress. Public discussions among those who take an interest in the Movement are very much wanted, both to suggest extensions of the Co-operative principle, and to keep - or sometimes to recall existing co-operative societies to the true meaning of the principle and the list of promoters forwarded with the committee's address, affords great promise that the soundest views of the subject will be well understood and earnestly supported"[2]

A similar letter of support was read out at the start of the second day's proceedings, the author on this occasion being Florence Nightingale.[3]

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1. Appendix 8-1 contains a full list of members.
2. Proceedings of the London Co-operative Congress, 1869, p 8.
3. Proceedings of the London Co-operative Congress, 1869, p 36.

Although the Congress discussed items such as guarantee banking and labour exchanges, applying Co-operation to agriculture and horticulture, and trade unions, it is clear from the proceedings that there was a desire to bring about closer union or confederation of the existing co-operative societies in the country. William Pare called for the formation of a society to be called the British and Foreign Co-operative League with a central board, a paid secretary and a staff of well qualified lecturers:

> "to make known the benefits of co-operation in localities which yet know nothing of the movement or which there is a lack of courage to join"[1]

George Jacob Holyoake read a paper on a "London Co-operative Board" and after a full discussion it was resolved to establish a provisional committee in London to act in conjunction with the existing Conference Committees in the North of England and Scotland, which would enact Congress resolutions and also convene another Congress in 1870.[2] The first Congress also resolved to form "country or district unions of Co-operative societies" as a basis for the general organisation.[3] The provisional committee chosen included Hughes, Morrison, Mundella, Allan, Holyoake, Lloyd Jones, Ludlow, Pare and E.V. Neale.[4] This was in effect the establishment of the Co-operative Union Ltd., and over the next four years annual Congresses revised and changed the structure in the light of experience. At the 1873 Congress held in Newcastle, Neale drafted the constitution of the Union, embracing a Central Board and five Sectional Boards i.e. Scottish, Northern, North Western, Midland and Southern. In turn each board would work independently in its own area, but for organisational reasons and control over central office, a committee of the Central Board, composed of 2 representatives of each Sectional Board was to meet quarterly.[5] This committee was

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1. Proceedings of the London Co-operative Congress, 1869, p 80.
2. Proceedings of the London Co-operative Congress, 1869, p 86.
3. Ludlow likened these to the Unions of Mechanics Institutes
4. Other members being Applegarth, Greening, Hodgson-Pratt (Hon sec. of the Working Men's Club and Institute Union), Henry Travis MD and Joseph Woodin.
5. North Western Section had 3 representatives and basically covered Yorkshire and Lancashire

called the United Board and was given power to control the salaried officers, to supervise the Sectional Boards, organise enquiries and issue reports and other publications.[1] The United Board thus became the effective governing body of the Movement subject only to the resolutions of Congress. A scattering of independent autonomous societies had come together to establish the modern Co-operative Movement. Although each society was still the master of its own destiny, they now shared responsibility for the future direction of the co-operative sector.

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION

The expansion of the Co-operative Movement following the 1862 Act was exceptional. The CWS after only 30 weeks trading in 1864 had £2,455 in capital and reserves, and net sales of £51,587. Ironically for the supporters of co-operative production the effects of the success of the CWS was to strengthen the position of those co-operators who thought that the Movement should restrict itself merely to storekeeping. The early co-operators had worked hard to establish productive units but little success was achieved. Even the Christian Socialists and their Society for Promoting Working Men's Associations did not fare any better between 1848-54.

When analysing co-operative production it is necessary to differentiate between those intimately linked to the retail wing and others that placed complete confidence in the abilities of the workers, in the particular productive unit, to determine their own development path. By far the largest group in the nineteenth century was production carried out by retail societies themselves in their bakeries, clogging departments corn mills and drapery departments etc. In 1908 they produced goods to the value of £11,085,095 or nearly 50% of the total production by co-operatives.[2] Table One shows that in Yorkshire just under half the

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1. E.V. Neale was appointed secretary in 1873.
2. C. Webb, Industrial Co-operation, (Manchester, 1912), pp 128-130

TABLE ONE DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIETIES ENGAGED IN PRODUCTIVE ENTERPRISES (YORKSHIRE)

YEAR		North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks	Total
1895	Number of Societies Engaged in Productive Enterprises	5	16	15	11	1	16	8	72
	% of Societies Engaged in Productive Enterprises	50.00	33.3	53.6	31.43	11.1	34.78	53.3	37.7
1896	Number of Societies Engaged in Productive Enterprises	5	18	15	12	0	13	7	70
	% of Societies Engaged in Productive Enterprises	50.00	37.5	53.57	34.29	0	29.55	50.00	37.43
1897	Number of Societies Engaged in Productive Enterprises	5	20	16	12	0	16	9	78
	% of Societies Engaged in Productive Enterprises	45.45	40.0	55.17	34.29	0	36.36	64.29	40.62
1898	Number of Societies Engaged in Productive Enterprises	5	20	16	14	0	16	10	81
	% of Societies Engaged in Productive Enterprises	41.66	37.74	59.26	41.18	0	37.21	71.43	42.41

Source: Congress Reports, 1896-1901

TABLE ONE DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIETIES ENGAGED IN PRODUCTIVE ENTERPRISES (YORKSHIRE)

YEAR		North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks	Total
1899	Number of Societies Engaged in Productive Enterprises	6	19	16	16	2	15	9	83
	% of Societies Engaged in Productive Enterprises	50.00	38.78	59.26	47.06	16.66	34.88	64.29	43.46
1900	Number of Societies Engaged in Productive Enterprises	5	25	16	16	4	16	8	90
	% of Societies Engaged in Productive Enterprises	41.66	50.00	57.14	51.61	25.00	38.1	61.54	46.87

Source: Congress Reports, 1896-1901

societies by 1900 had productive departments and these employed 2,793 people. The second, and increasingly important group were the federal productive units of the CWS and SCWS. This second group established factories and workshops designed to produce large quantities of goods required by their member societies. By 1908 the two wholesale societies produced goods to the value of £8,464,021 or 37.2% of the total production. The third group consisted of corn mill societies which were mainly federations of retail societies such as the Colne Vale Corn Millers in Slaithwaite. In 1908 the seven corn mill societies nationally produced flour to the value of £1,048,943. Thus the first three forms of co-operative production accounted for nearly 90% of the total value of goods manufactured and was based upon the principles of production for and in the interests of the consumer.

The final category comprised societies formed specially for production and took many differing forms including those that belonged to the "co-partnership" movement.[1] This group produced goods to the value of £2,180,226 or about 10% of the total production. The workers in this group, unlike the other forms of production, shared directly in the success of the business via profit sharing. Indeed the three principles of this form of co-operative production were:

i. The worker had a right and must have the opportunity to become a shareholder

ii That the worker had a right to share in the profits of the undertaking

iii. That the worker had a right to take part in the management of the undertaking.

These were the three guiding principles of the Labour Co-partnership Association established in 1874 by Hughes, Greening, Ripon and others.

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1. Some being federations of retail societies, others had mixed membership of individuals and retail societies; and some consisted entirely of individuals.

They clung tenaciously to the Owenite-Christian Socialist belief that co-operation involved liberating the worker from wage-earning employment. Ludlow summed up this philosophy at the 1873 Congress by stating that:

> "consideration for the producer was the first stepping stone in the path of English co-operation ... we should raise the producer to his true dignity to subordinate mere consumption altogether to production ... consumption was merely the animal element, production the divine ... The main question was not whether consumers should get goods cheaper, but whether the men who spend themselves in the production of that article shall or shall not have the primary claim to the fruits of their labours. The question is not whether producers are to have better masters, but whether they are to be their own masters".[1]

Ripon, Greening and Neale took a special interest in one Yorkshire productive society, the Hebden Bridge Fustian Manufacturing Society. This society was established in 1870 by a few fustian cutters subscribing three pence a week to build up their first capital to establish a self-employing workshop. With a capital of £83 they did a trade of £55 during the first half-year making a profit of £3. Progress was swift and by 1890 profits had increased to £1,666 and were distributed as follows:

		£
i.	To share holders at 5% p.a.	535
ii.	To members in their purchases at the rate of 9d in the pound	489
iii.	To non-members at half this rate	48
iv.	To labour at rate of 9d in £ on wages	219
v.	Education Fund	30
vi.	Reserve Fund	200
vii.	Insurance Fund	200
viii.	Carried Forward	45[2]

1. Congress Report, 1873, p 8.
2. Co-operative News, January 17th, 1891, p 70.

Giving evidence before the Labour Commission Mr. Joseph Greenwood the manager of the society defined co-operative production as

> "the carrying on of any industry in the interest more particularly of the workers who are employed therein, so as to obtain for them a larger share of the results arising from their labours and to give them a more direct interest in their work."[1]

In the course of cross examination he admitted that the Hebden Bridge Fustian Society did not come under the definition, but he asserted that the society gave better wages than other firms and gave more continuous employment. Other examples of co-operative co-partnership to be found in Yorkshire were the Airedale Co-operative Worsted Manufacturing Society in Bradford (see photograph), William Thomson and Sons in Huddersfield, Keighley Ironworkers Society and Henry Briggs Son and Co.[2] Although they were regarded by their proponents as being important advances in the "true" co-operative cause they still represented a small percentage of total production and they touched few in real terms.

The growing power of the CWS in the productive field alarmed many supporters of the productive (co-partnership) camp. Tom Hughes took the opportunity at the nineteenth Congress held in Carlisle in 1887, to show where he stood in this important debate. He could see the CWS extending their productive capacity and felt that the extent and number of the enterprises were beyond the capacity of any central body to manage efficiently and management by distant committees could lead to old antagonism between employer and employed and the workmen had no share in either ownership or profits:

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1. Minutes of Evidence, Labour Commission, 26 October 1892 pp 67-70
2. In 1865 this firm became a limited liability Company. Shares were offered to the public with preference given to employees. This mining concern, like the Middlesbrough example in Chapter 4, p 140, was established to get members away from trade union membership. Report on Profit Sharing - Board of Trade Report by Mr. D.F. Schloss on 'Profit Sharing' 1894 C 7458 p 27.

AIREDALE CO-OPERATIVE MANUFACTURING SOCIETY
LIMITED.

MAKERS OF . . .

DRESS GOODS (Plain and Fancies), TWILLS, and ITALIAN CLOTHS

(For Bespoke and . . Ready-made Depts.).

Viz.:

CASHMERES, SERGES, ESTAMENES, . .

ALPACAS, HABIT CLOTHS, ...

SATEENS, AND FIGURED GOODS, ...

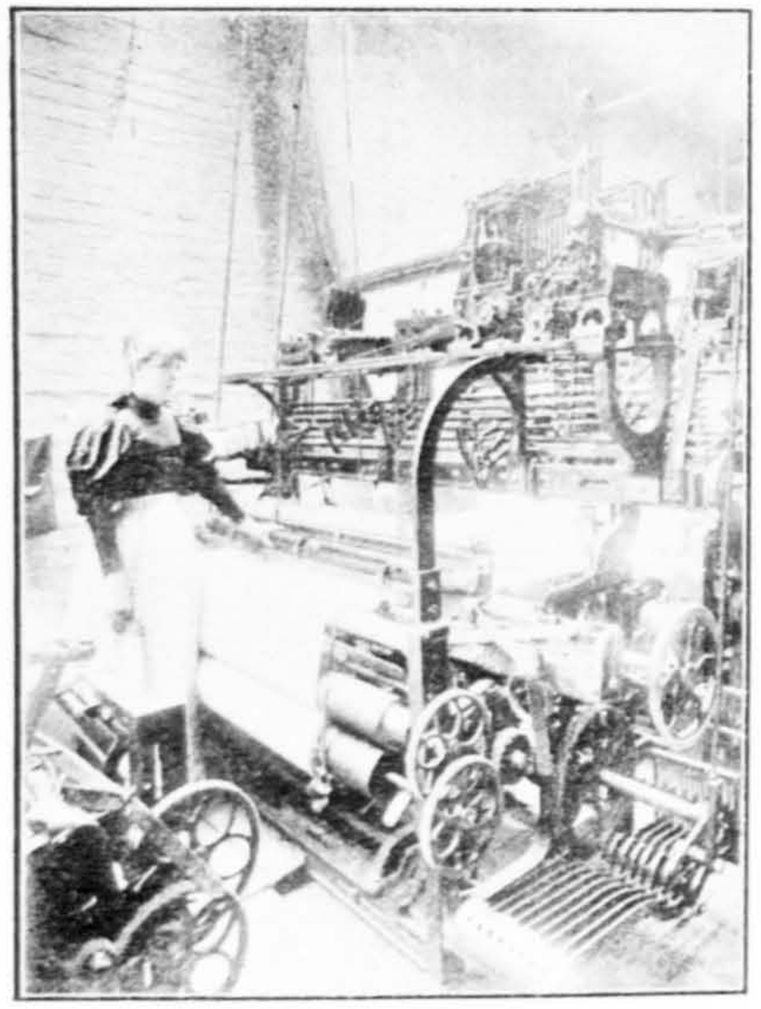
IN LARGE VARIETY.

Position of Society in Periods of 5 Years.

Ending	Sales. £	Profits. £	Loss. £	Share Capital. £	Reserve. £
DEC., 1878	29.694	—	39	1.618	—
,, 1883	29.030	1.711	—	2.027	250
,, 1888	44.978	3.055	—	2.766	487
,, 1893	67.208	4.053	—	3.385	707
,, 1898	89.484	4.334	—	4.750	974
1900	37.094	2.016	—	5.177	1 019

(2 YEARS).

Samples sent to Societies on Application.



PROFITS divided between those who helped to make them, viz., **WORKERS, SHAREHOLDERS,** and **PURCHASERS.**

TELEPHONE No. 836.

NOTE ADDRESS:

FULTON STREET, BRADFORD, YORKS.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

TYPICAL ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE AIREDALE CO-OPERATIVE MANUFACTURING SOCIETY LTD.

> "the centralised system is ingeniously adopted to alienate the individual workers, and the trade organisations which they have formed for their own protection; to lose the watchful eye of the employer without substituting for it the ever-present eyes of the employed; and to abandon the higher aims of association for the sole end of dividend hunting".[1]

J.T. Mitchell, the chairman of the CWS rejected the views of both Hughes and Ludlow. Mitchell, or as he was also called 'Baron Wholesale' felt that all profits and incremental values should find their way into the pockets of the people and that dividend on purchases ensured this.[2] The CWS chairman firmly believed that consumption ought to be the basis of the growth of all Co-operation. Mitchell was ably supported in these debates by Mrs. Beatrice Webb who felt that consumer Co-operation was a much more desirable and practical system than producer Co-operation. She saw the Rochdale system as one which abolished the profit making entrepreneur but retained the wage system while producer Co-operation was one which aimed to abolish the wage system but retained profit making. She found nothing ethical in producer Co-operation for if people worked harder and better in productive societies it was not in order to help others but to help themselves:

> "... an industrial organisation which substitutes for one profit maker many profit makers is not a step forward in the moralization of trade".[3]

The co-operative dichotomy was aptly shown by J.G. Gray[4] at the quarterly conference of the Calderdale District Co-operative Association on 13th December 1884:

> "strange to say the very success of distribution, which was intended originally as a preparatory step to production, has proved detrimental to the carrying out of the vital principle involved in the scheme of elevating labour".[5]

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1. Congress Report, 1887, p 4.
2. The CWS bonus on labour in their productive units was completely abandoned in 1886. F. Hall and W.P. Watkins, Co-operation, (Manchester, 1938), p 145.
3. B. Potter, later Mrs. B. Webb, The Co-operative Movement in Great Britain, (1891), p 155.
4. Gray became General Secretary of the Co-operative Union in 1891.
5. Co-operative News, 3rd January, 1885, p 5.

Men like Gray and Hughes inspired by higher principles saw co-operative production as the raison d'etre for co-operative growth and development; however, the effects of co-operative growth made this an impossible dream. A spirited rearguard action by supporters of production, was staged in the field of educational provision.

EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

Robert Owen and his many followers recognised the immense value of education in promoting human and co-operative progress. The early pioneers in Yorkshire shared this viewpoint which was also an important element in the Rochdale model of Co-operation already shown in Chapter Three. Within a few years of their establishment the Rochdale society had opened a library and newsroom and by 1852 their rules enabled them to contribute 2½% of their profits towards educational provision. Hall and Watkins have stated:

> "Other societies copied the example of the Rochdale Pioneers in organising classes in scientific, technological, art, commercial, and general subjects, and this work was being done on an extensive scale by the Co-operative Movement before it became a recognised public responsibility".[1]

However, it is clear that educational provision did not, in Yorkshire or elsewhere, play the significant role that has been suggested by economic and social historians. Indeed it must be recognised that there was little enthusiasm for education amongst the working classes. As in the case of co-operative production a very dismal picture emerges with a few positive examples being overshadowed by the majority of societies who chose not to participate in this field of activity. The educational message was rejected by the majority of societies despite active campaigning by the leaders of the Movement and a small band of academics who recognised the need to educate a "mass membership" in the ideals and principles of Co-operation. In an age when the state was beginning to play an increasing role in education many co-operators were seriously questioning the need to participate, even though there was personal distrust for such governmental involvement.

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1. F. Hall and W.P. Watkins, Co-operation, (Manchester, 1937), p 169.

The subject of education was constantly discussed at conferences and congresses. At the 1879 Congress held in Gloucester the inaugural address was delivered by Professor Stuart of Cambridge Unviersity. Stuart was a committed co-operator and felt that the ultimate material object of Co-operation was to make the working people their own masters and the co-operative store was from the very first a means towards an end. The Professor said that:

> "Your Movement is a democratic movement. It, therefore, cannot repose on the good sense of a few; its success will depend on the good sense of the masses of your people, who, if they be ignorant, can in no way judge the merit of this or that adventure, of the wisdom of this or that commercial step".[1]

Co-operation had arrived at a point when the material advantages arising from distribution and exchange had become so great that the Movement was attracting people who were ignorant of its higher aspirations.

Arnold Toynbee spoke on the 'Education of Co-operators' at the 1882 Congress held in Oxford.[2] He reviewed modern associations,[3] Robert Owen and various forms of educational provision. Toynbee felt that the most appropriate form of education for co-operators was "the education of the citizen". This scheme involved the teaching of:

i. Political Education - descriptions of political institutions, local and national; history of institutions, political ideals of great writers; political relations between England and other countries

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1. Congress Report, 1879, Inaugural Address, p 6.
2. Appendix 8-2 records this address in full, reference having already been made in the Introduction.
3. Building Societies, Friendly Societies, Trade Unions.

FANCY DRAPERY SHOP OF YORK SOCIETY

16 and 18 RAILWAY STREET (LIBRARY ABOVE)

ii. Industrial Education - existing industrial system; production and distribution; study of mediaeval guilds; poor laws, trade unions; material conditions of the working classes; history of social ideas

iii. Sanitary Education - Duties of citizens in relation to prevention of the spread of disease.

The scheme advanced by Toynbee was designed to show man's duties to his fellow men. He recognised it would be difficult to persuade men to listen to any scheme that did not "concern pleasure or profit". That working men were less concerned with political and social questions, because they were more prosperous and that there was the danger that material comfort may diminish spiritual energy.

Both Stuart and Toynbee recognised there was a real need to educate co-operators. Movements with mass memberships were prone to seek immediate financial gain and both understood that if Co-operation was to move from the distributive to productive stages of growth and development it was essential that the ordinary members be given a much better grounding in the composition and workings of the real world.

By 1884 societies throughout the country were spending £13,000 on education provision - half of this was spent on newsrooms, one quarter on libraries, and the remaining quarter on entertainments, excursions or in selling the Co-operative News at a reduced price or giving it away.[1] The statistical information however confirms that the majority of societies in the country were not subscribing towards education. Yorkshire lagged behind Lancashire, but even in Lancashire few came close to the record established by the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers. In 1880 just under 20% of Yorkshire societies were contributing towards educational provision.[2] Over the next twenty years it did increase, but still fell short of 40%:

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1. 1884 was the year when Co-operative Union statistics gave the most comprehensive survey of educational spending.
2. 29 societies making education grants out of a total of 149.

Year	% of Societies Contributing Towards Education
1880	19.46%
1885	25.14%
1890	29.18%
1895	31.93%
1900	38.54%

When a district analysis is adopted the following result emerges:

	North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks
1885	40%	21.43%	36.0%	25.7%	0%	12.19%	57.14%
1890	70%	20.0%	30.7%	33.33%	14.28%	15.22%	66.66%
1895	20%	31.25%	25.0%	42.85%	22.22%	21.74%	66.66%
1900	50%	34.0%	35.7%	41.93%	50.00%	21.43%	84.6%

1

Societies in the South Yorkshire district clearly surpassed all other districts and languishing at the bottom was the Huddersfield district where in 1900 only 9 societies out of 42 contributed towards education.[2] In monetary terms grants towards education increased from £911 in 1878 to £9,585 in 1900, more than a ten fold increase. Table Two shows that in 1900 the district contributions were: Dewsbury £2,760; Airedale £2566; South Yorkshire £1,720; Calderdale £1,019; Huddersfield £792; East Yorkshire £502; and the North Riding £226. Table Two also expresses the grants made as a percentage of net profits. In 1878 0.30% of net profits went towards educational provision and by the close of the century this figure had more than doubled and stood at 0.64%. In 1900 the Dewsbury district was paying out a much higher percentage of its profits than any other district with a figure of 1.09%,

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1. Based on Co-operative Union Annual Returns
2. Very little change since E.O. Greening visited Huddersfield in 1882 as described in Chapter Five.

with only the East Riding District at 0.88% coming close to this figure. It is clear that over the 23 year period Yorkshire societies did increase their grants to education but that the figures achieved were well below the standard set by the Rochdale society.

In Table Three attention is focused on 15 societies that were known to have contributed in the vast majority of years between 1878-1900. None of these societies could be found in the North Riding, East Yorkshire or Huddersfield districts. However five came from the South Yorkshire district i.e. Barnsley British, Doncaster, Kilnhurst, Masbro' and Stocksbridge; four came from the Dewsbury district i.e. Dewsbury, Churwell, Cleckheaton and Morley; three came from Airedale i.e. Leeds, Keighley and Bingley; and three came from Calderdale i.e. Todmorden Industrial, Hebden Bridge and Mytholmroyd. It is clear that these 15 societies were contributing the bulk of the country's grants towards education e.g. in 1878 they contributed £839 of the county total of £911 or 92.1%.[1]

Middlesbrough, Todmorden Bridge End, Walsden, Sheffield and Huddersfield Industrial became regular subscribers after 1884 and by 1890 had been joined by Driffield, Castleford, Denaby Main, Goole, Batley, Harrogate, Skelton, Gargrave, Mirfield and Windhill. There were some slow starters, Halifax made a contribution of £28 in 1879 and nothing else until 1894 when a £20 grant was made.[2] Other late comers were Brighouse (1894); Wakefield (1892); York (1896); Heckmondwike (1897); and Brightside and Carbrook (1893), yet the oldest society in the county - Meltham Mills, only paid on a regular basis from 1890 onwards. There were clusters of societies contributing to education e.g. in the Todmorden, Barnsley and Dewsbury areas. However there were exceptions to the rule in all of these areas. Cleckheaton with an excellent record of achievement was situated next door to the Heckmondwike society, a society with a very poor record. It must, however, have been an important factor in an area if a neighbouring society was taking an interest in this cause and vice versa if nobody was doing anything then

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1. This percentage had dropped to 60% by 1900 - but was still a significant proportion.

2. By the end of the century Halifax were contributing £300 p.a., this being 2.09% of net profits.

TABLE TWO EDUCATION GRANTS MADE BY YORKSHIRE RETAIL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

Indicating Total Grants made by Sections: Number of Societies making grants and grants expressed as a percentage of net profits

YEAR		Total for County	North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks
1878	Grants	£911							
	Societies	19 Societies							
	% of net profits	0.30							
1879	Grants	£1,321							
	Societies	28 Societies							
	% of net profits	0.30							
1880	Grants	£1,744							
	Societies	29 Societies							
	% of net profits	0.44							
1881	Grants	£1,870							
	Societies	33 Societies							
	% of net profits	0.49							
1882	Grants	£1,870							
	Societies	34 Societies							
	% of net profits	0.47							

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901

TABLE TWO EDUCATION GRANTS MADE BY YORKSHIRE RETAIL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

Indicating Total Grants made by Sections: Number of Societies making grants and grants expressed as a percentage of net profits

YEAR		Total for County	North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks
1883	Grants	£1,927							
	Societies	40 Societies							
	% of net profits	0.44							
1884	Grants	£2,447	£33	£673	£643	£831	£8	£11	£248
	Societies	46 Societies	3 Societies	10 Societies	9 Societies	7 Societies	1 Society	5 Societies	11 Societies
	% of net profits	0.48	0.22	0.53	0.59	0.75	0.79	0.01	0.41
1885	Grants	£2,908	£38	£694	£694	£811	none	£73	£598
	Societies	44 Societies	4 Societies	9 Societies	9 Societies	9 Societies	-	5 Societies	8 Societies
	% of net profits	0.55	0.25	0.52	0.59	0.67	-	0.09	1.05
1886	Grants	£2,772	£34	£612	£708	£804	£3	£26	£549
	Societies	45 Societies	4 Societies	8 Societies	8 Societies	9 Societies	1 Society	4 Societies	11 Societies
	% of net profits	0.51	0.55	0.44	0.48	0.67	0.35	0.03	0.99
1887	Grants	£3,085	£84	£741	£832	£837	£3	£45	£543
	Societies	39 Societies	4 Societies	8 Societies	6 Societies	9 Societies	1 Society	4 Societies	7 Societies
	% of net profits	0.51	0.46	0.47	0.63	0.62	0.37	0.04	0.91

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901

TABLE TWO EDUCATION GRANTS MADE BY YORKSHIRE RETAIL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

Indicating Total Grants made by Sections: Number of Societies making grants and grants expressed as a percentage of net profits

YEAR		Total for County	North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks
1888	Grants	£3,288	£34	£825	£669	£1,203	£3	£40	£514
	Societies	42 Societies	2 Societies	9 Societies	6 Societies	11 Societies	1 Society	5 Societies	8 Societies
	% of net profits	0.52	0.19	0.51	0.49	0.84	0.40	0.04	0.82
1889	Grants	£3,736	£33	£1,023	£936	£1,100	£2	£55	£587
	Societies	54 Societies	4 Societies	10 Societies	9 Societies	12 Societies	1 Society	10 Societies	8 Societies
	% of net profits	0.54	0.16	0.51	0.66	0.70	0.16	0.05	0.90
1890	Grants	£4,139	£73	£1,076	£972	£1,205	£3	£57	£753
	Societies	54 Societies	7 Societies	9 Societies	8 Societies	12 Societies	1 Society	7 Societies	10 Societies
	% of net profits	0.55	0.30	0.50	0.65	0.70	0.14	0.50	0.90
1891	Grants	£4,647	£41	£1,178	£979	£1,443	£5	£7	£994
	Societies	46 Societies	5 Societies	10 Societies	7 Societies	10 Societies	1 Society	4 Societies	9 Societies
	% of net profits	0.56	0.17	0.50	0.62	0.77	0.12	0.006	0.93
1892	Grants	£5,012	£43	£1,166	£930	£1,554	£4	£216	£1,099
	Societies	46 Societies	4 Societies	10 Societies	5 Societies	13 Societies	1 Society	5 Societies	8 Societies
	% of net profits	0.58	0.23	0.46	0.59	0.81	0.08	0.19	0.93

Source: Congrss Reports, 1879-1901

TABLE TWO EDUCATION GRANTS MADE BY YORKSHIRE RETAIL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

Indicating Total Grants made by Sections: Number of Societies making grants and grants expressed as a percentage of net profits

YEAR		Total for County	North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks
1893	Grants	£5,421	£55	£1,187	£949	£1,759	£7	£389	£1,075
	Societies	51 Societies	3 Societies	12 Societies	7 Societies	13 Societies	2 Societies	4 Societies	10 Societies
	% of net profits	0.65	0.27	0.47	0.63	0.96	0.12	0.36	1.0
1894	Grants	£5,870	£57	£1,302	£963	£1,709	£18	£607	£1,214
	Societies	61 Societies	2 Societies	15 Societies	9 Societies	12 Societies	3 Societies	10 Societies	10 Societies
	% of net profits	0.71	0.25	0.54	0.63	0.94	0.22	0.57	1.03
1895	Grants	£6,432	£70	£1,339	£1,105	£1,875	£16	£736	£1,291
	Societies	61 Societies	2 Societies	15 Societies	7 Societies	15 Societies	2 Societies	10 Societies	10 Societies
	% of net profits	0.71	0.27	0.51	0.68	0.94	0.15	0.61	0.97
1896	Grants	£6,734	£114	£1,465	£1,087	£2,016	£97	£629	£1,326
	Societies	57 Societies	5 Societies	12 Societies	10 Societies	13 Societies	4 Socieites	3 Societies	10 Societies
	% of net profits	0.60	0.34	0.45	0.55	0.86	0.65	0.44	0.75
1897	Grants	£8,373	£56	£1,857	£2,155	£2,288	£78	£570	£1,369
	Societies	66 Societies	4 Societies	13 Societies	11 Societies	16 Societies	4 Societies	9 Societies	9 Societies
	% of net profits	0.68	0.14	0.50	1.06	0.90	0.45	0.38	0.73

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901

TABLE TWO EDUCATION GRANTS MADE BY YORKSHIRE RETAIL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

Indicating Total Grants made by Sections: Number of Societies making grants and grants expressed as a percentage of net profits

YEAR		Total for County	North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks
1898	Grants	£8,183	£91	£2,040	£1,244	£2,562	£214	£609	£1,423
	Societies	68 Societies	6 Societies	12 Societies	11 Societies	13 Societies	6 Societies	10 Societies	10 Societies
	% of net profits	0.63	0.20	0.49	0.58	1.08	0.99	0.38	0.68
1899	Grants	£9,263	£101	£2,474	£1,107	£2,534	£492	£890	£1,665
	Societies	73 Societies	6 Societies	15 Societies	11 Societies	14 Societies	7 Societies	9 Societies	11 Societies
	% of net profits	0.81	0.20	0.60	0.50	1.01	1.92	0.55	0.73
1900	Grants	£9,585	£226	£2,566	£1,019	£2,760	£502	£792	£1,720
	Societies	74 Societies	6 Societies	17 Societies	10 Societies	13 Societies	8 Societies	9 Societies	11 Societies
	% of net profits	0.64	0.43	0.54	0.46	1.09	0.88	0.49	0.65

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901.

TABLE THREE EDUCATION GRANTS MADE BY THE 15 SOCIETIES CONTRIBUTING IN MOST YEARS 1878-1900 (figures in brackets are education grants expressed as a percentage of net profits)

NAME OF SOCIETY		1878	1879	1880	1881
Barnsley British (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	15 (0.1%)	18 (0.1%)	21 (0.11%)	20 (0.10%)
	Net Profits	15,109	18,355	19,562	19,863
Dewsbury Pioneers (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	145 (0.84%)	153 (0.83%)	138 (0.79%)	144 (0.98%)
	Net Profits	17,258	18,439	17,384	14,655
Bingley (Airedale District)	Education Grant	107 (1.9%)	110 (1.68%)	101 (1.38%)	103 (1.97%)
	Net Profits	5,622	6,552	7,300	5,218
Churwell (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	15 (1.6%)	31 (2.61%)	29 (2.15)	29 (1.99%)
	Net Profits	888	1,186	1,350	1,460
Cleckheaton (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	22 (0.43%)	150 (2.56%)	259 (4.06%)	166 (2.40%)
	Net Profits	5,151	5,854	6,376	6,916
Doncaster (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	42 (1.59%)	42 (1.14%)	41 (1.10%)	40 (1.25%)
	Net Profits	2,641	3,672	3,733	3,205
Kilnhurst (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	14 (1.75%)	17 (3.59%)	7 (0.78%)	7 (2.27%)
	Net Profits	798	474	899	308
Masbro' (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	68 (2.48%)	47 (1.75%)	24 (0.98%)	24 (1.11%)
	Net Profits	2,736	2,691	2,458	2,162
Morley Industrial (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	93 (1.58%)	150 (1.70%)	206 (2.32%)	182 (2.14%)
	Net Profits	5,873	8,827	8,893	8,510
Stocksbridge (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	15 (0.8%)	20 (1.01%)	20 (1.41%)	20 (0.78%)
	Net Profits	1,862	1,979	1,415	2,560
Todmorden (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	303 (2.12%)	267 (1.94%)	328 (2.0%)	346 (1.98%)
	Net Profits	14,318	13,754	16,433	17,447
Hebden Bridge Indus. (Calderdale District)	Education Grant		64 (1.14%)	67 (1.13%)	66 (1.76%)
	Net Profits		5,612	5,937	3,754
Keighley (Airedale District)	Education Grant		54 (0.88%)	141 (1.92%)	117 (1.50%)
	Net Profits		6,112	7,345	7,803
Mytholmroyd (Calderdale District)	Education Grant		30 (1.74%)	28 (1.84%)	34 (2.52%)
	Net Profits		1,729	1,522	1,351
Leeds (Airedale District)	Education Grant			127 (0.28%)	331 (0.82%)
	Net Profits			45,895	40,259

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901

TABLE THREE EDUCATION GRANTS MADE BY THE 15 SOCIETIES CONTRIBUTING IN MOST YEARS

1878-1900 (figures in brackets are education grants expressed as a percentage of net profits)

NAME OF SOCIETY		1882	1883	1884	1885
Barnsley British (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	22 (0.08%)	14 (0.05%)	50 (0.12%)	393 (1.09%)
	Net Profits	25,807	28,147	40,005	36,074
Dewsbury Pioneers (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	135 (0.99%)	151 (1.01%)	180 (1.15%)	173 (1.01%)
	Net Profits	13,552	14,954	15,675	17,188
Bingley (Airedale District)	Education Grant	111 (2.1%)	133 (2.52%)	143 (2.69%)	131 (1.86%)
	Net Profits	5,281	5,283	5,314	7,047
Churwell (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	15 (0.98%)	16 (1.01%)	20 (1.31%)	21 (1.59%)
	Net Profits	1.536	1,678	1,529	1,322
Cleckheaton (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	175 (2.44%)	215 (2.20%)	240 (2.54%)	234 (2.49%)
	Net Profits	7,186	9,768	9,453	9,396
Doncaster (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	37 (1.24%)	39 (1.31%)	46 (1.18%)	60 (1.24%)
	Net Profits	2,972	2,980	3,895	4,831
Kilnhurst (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	13 (2.81%)	23 (2.67%)	26 (2.47%)	32 (2.47%)
	Net Profits	462	861	1,052	1,294
Masbro' (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	31 (1.15%)	37 (1.11%)	45 (0.99%)	52 (0.99%)
	Net Profits	2,699	3,327	4,563	5,240
Morley Industrial (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	187 (2.05%)	187 (2.02%)	283 (3.09%)	255 (2.68%)
	Net Profits	9,135	9,252	9,163	9,499
Stocksbridge (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	20 (0.63%)	20 (0.54%)	40 (0.97%)	40 (1.00%)
	Net Profits	3,160	3,695	4,117	4,000
Todmorden (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	362 (2.38%)	383 (2.38%)	392 (2.38%)	411 (2.40%)
	Net Profits	15,230	16,120	16,474	17,159
Hebden Bridge Indus. (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	77 (1.49%)	77 (1.48%)	77 (1.49%)	85 (1.52%)
	Net Profits	5,170	5,200	5,162	5,603
Keighley (Airedale District)	Education Grant	128 (1.45%)	107 (1.00%)	127 (1.00%)	133 (0.98%)
	Net Profits	8,817	10,732	12,732	13,543
Mytholmroyd (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	36 (2.47%)	44 (1.86%)	48 (1.88%)	58 (1.97%)
	Net Profits	1,456	2,364	2,559	2,939
Leeds (Airedale District)	Education Grant	300 (0.73%)	188 (0.38%)	360 (0.62%)	400 (0.67%)
	Net Profits	40,967	50,020	58,175	59,314

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901

TABLE THREE EDUCATION GRANTS MADE BY THE 15 SOCIETIES CONTRIBUTING IN MOST YEARS

1878-1900 (figures in brackets are education grants expressed as a percentage of net profits)

NAME OF SOCIETY		1886	1887	1888	1889
Barnsley British (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	330 (1.02%)	321 (1.01%)	294 (0.99%)	342 (0.99%)
	Net Profits	32,202	31,808	29,667	34,413
Dewsbury Pioneers (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	186 (1.01%)	188 (1.00%)	262 (1.25%)	287 (1.25%)
	Net Profits	18,388	18,719	20,879	22,955
Bingley (Airedale District)	Education Grant	115 (1.59%)	111 (1.59%)	134 (1.79%)	133 (1.61%)
	Net Profits	7,217	6,984	7,470	8,251
Churwell (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	18 (1.45%)	32 (2.27%)	26 (2.58%)	29 (2.42%)
	Net Profits	1,242	1,412	1,006	1,199
Cleckheaton (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	248 (2.50%)	281 (2.49%)	286 (2.50%)	299 (2.35%)
	Net Profits	9,930	11,272	11,453	12,720
Doncaster (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	62 (1.25%)	75 (1.22%)	90 (1.40%)	75 (1.22%)
	Net Profits	5,970	6,165	6,424	6,134
Kilnhurst (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	25 (1.76%)	27 (1.78%)	30 (1.76%)	31 (1.32%)
	Net Profits	1,419	1,515	1,706	2,342
Masbro' (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	58 (0.96%)	65 (1.14%)	44 (0.58%)	74 (1.00%)
	Net Profits	6,057	5,706	7,682	7,387
Morley Industrial (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	199 (1.99%)	235 (1.99%)	244 (1.93%)	268 (2.01%)
	Net Profits	9,995	11,793	12,652	13,306
Stocksbridge (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	40 (1.04%)	40 (0.58%)	40 (0.46%)	40 (0.88%)
	Net Profits	3,847	6,883	8,666	4,568
Todmorden (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	409 (2.42%)	476 (2.41%)	358 (1.77%)	496 (2.38%)
	Net Profits	16,930	19,722	20,269	20,884
Hebden Bridge Indus. (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	90 (1.49%)	163 (2.16%)	116 (1.50%)	224 (2.49%)
	Net Profits	6,041	7,536	7,756	9,002
Keighley (Airedale District)	Education Grant	159 (1.14%)	149 (1.00%)	150 (0.99%)	171 (1.00%)
	Net Profits	13,986	14,947	15,053	17,146
Mytholmroyd (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	54 (1.95%)	51 (1.93%)	50 (2.50%)	60 (2.03%)
	Net Profits	2,775	2,648	2,002	2,951
Leeds (Airedale District)	Education Grant	315 (0.60%)	440 (0.69%)	502 (0.71%)	586 (0.75%)
	Net Profits	52,833	63,977	71,109	78,142

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901

TABLE THREE EDUCATION GRANTS MADE BY THE 15 SOCIETIES CONTRIBUTING IN MOST YEARS

1878-1900 (figures in brackets are education grants expressed as a percentage of net profits)

NAME OF SOCIETY		1890	1891	1892	1893
Barnsley British (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	457 (1.01%)	617 (1.01%)	638 (1.01%)	535 (1.01%)
	Net Profits	45,387	61,325	62,813	52,959
Dewsbury Pioneers (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	320 (1.25%)	472 (1.54%)	536 (1.50%)	639 (1.91%)
	Net Profits	25,499	30,602	35,699	33,498
Bingley (Airedale District)	Education Grant	131 (1.51%)	137 (1.57%)	83 (0.97%)	65 (0.75%)
	Net Profits	8,349	8,750	8,538	8,678
Churwell (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	19 (1.29%)	26 (1.50%)	23 (1.17%)	21 (1.08%)
	Net Profits	1,469	1,730	1,960	1,944
Cleckheaton (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	324 (2.54%)	338 (2.52%)	312 (2.49%)	291 (2.49%)
	Net Profits	12,768	13,423	12,508	11,700
Doncaster (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	87 (1.22%)	116 (1.36%)	179 (1.65%)	174 (1.63%)
	Net Profits	7,111	8,524	10,855	10,690
Kilnhurst (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	34 (1.37%)	37 (1.19%)	37 (1.12%)	37 (1.22%)
	Net Profits	2,488	3,121	3,290	3,024
Masbro' (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	78 (0.92%)	99 (1.15%)	121 (1.00%)	170 (1.78%)
	Net Profits	8,459	8,625	12,149	9,530
Morley Industrial (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	316 (2.05%)	377 (2.22%)	372 (2.13%)	374 (2.31%)
	Net Profits	15,431	16,951	17,425	16,190
Stocksbridge (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	55 (0.97%)	60 (1.00%)	60 (1.03%)	60 (1.10%)
	Net Profits	5,656	6,027	5,801	5,468
Todmorden (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	504 (2.02%)	555 (2.29%)	527 (2.42%)	491 (2.42%)
	Net Profits	24,993	24,273	21,774	20,270
Hebden Bridge Indus. (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	213 (2.49%)	220 (2.49%)	228 (2.49%)	232 (2.49%)
	Net Profits	8,543	8,825	9,167	9,326
Keighley (Airedale District)	Education Grant	247 (1.25%)	229 (1.06%)	213 (1.00%)	257 (1.17%)
	Net Profits	19,715	21,610	21,372	21,927
Mytholmroyd (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	57 (2.49%)	55 (2.47%)	52 (2.48%)	43 (2.43%)
	Net Profits	2,289	2,229	2,096	1,771
Leeds (Airedale District)	Education Grant	664 (0.75%)	756 (0.75%)	818 (0.75%)	771 (0.75%)
	Net Profits	88,556	100,804	109,188	102,837

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901

TABLE THREE EDUCATION GRANTS MADE BY THE 15 SOCIETIES CONTRIBUTING IN MOST YEARS

1878-1900 (figures in brackets are education grants expressed as a percentage of net profits)

NAME OF SOCIETY		1894	1895	1896	1897
Barnsley British (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	524 (1.01%)	562 (0.96%)	603 (0.79%)	606 (0.81%)
	Net Profits	52,006	58,240	76,237	74,973
Dewsbury Pioneers (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	517 (1.5%)	556 (1.5%)	595 (1.25%)	676 (1.42%)
	Net Profits	34,468	37,055	47,600	47,666
Bingley (Airedale District)	Education Grant	68 (0.80%)	61 (0.66%)	57 (0.45%)	82 (0.68%)
	Net Profits	8,518	9,292	12,699	12,107
Churwell (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	33 (1.83%)	20 (1.39%)	38 (2.08%)	20 (1.17%)
	Net Profits	1,799	1,444	1,830	1,706
Cleckheaton (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	321 (2.51%)	350 (2.54%)	362 (2.08%)	387 (2.28%)
	Net Profits	12,800	13,757	17,425	16,983
Doncaster (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	225 (1.66%)	287 (1.68%)	305 (1.65%)	291 (1.38%)
	Net Profits	13,543	17,058	18,434	21,129
Kilnhurst (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	38 (1.22%)	39 (1.23%)	37 (0.98%)	37 (0.94%)
	Net Profits	3,118	3,179	3,782	3,918
Masbro' (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	195 (1.64%)	128 (1.19%)	145 (1.00%)	152 (1.11%)
	Net Profits	11,933	10,727	14,509	13,693
Morley Industrial (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	305 (1.86%)	374 (2.00%)	405 (1.97%)	422 (1.52%)
	Net Profits	16,429	18,731	20,586	27,846
Stocksbridge (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	60 (0.90%)	60 (0.86%)	60 (0.59%)	60 (0.74%)
	Net Profits	6,701	6,990	10,111	8,155
Todmorden (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	458 (2.42%)	508 (2.42%)	490 (1.98%)	504 (1.98%)
	Net Profits	18,943	20,957	24,798	25,396
Hebden Bridge Indus. (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	254 (2.50%)	268 (2.49%)	280 (2.10%)	301 (2.13%)
	Net Profits	10,173	10,771	13,340	14,099
Keighley (Airedale District)	Education Grant	298 (1.39%)	276 (1.22%)	259 (0.90%)	308 (1.00%)
	Net Profits	21,402	22,628	28,707	30,658
Mytholmroyd (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	45 (2.48%)	52 (2.51%)	52 (1.93%)	52 (2.00%)
	Net Profits	1,813	2,074	2,696	2,603
Leeds (Airedale District)	Education Grant	809 (0.75%)	858 (0.75%)	937 (0.67%)	1,235 (0.75%)
	Net Profits	107,917	114,502	139,312	164,792

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901

TABLE THREE EDUCATION GRANTS MADE BY THE 15 SOCIETIES CONTRIBUTING IN MOST YEARS

1878-1900 (figures in brackets are education grants expressed as a percentage of net profits)

NAME OF SOCIETY		1898	1899	1900	Average Grant over period
Barnsley British (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	608 (0.74%)	640 (0.73%)	701 (0.69%)	8,335 (0.77%)
	Net Profits	81,738	87,187	101,159	1,085,036
Dewsbury Pioneers (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	579 (1.50%)	714 (1.79%)	818 (1.6%)	8,564 (1.36%)
	Net Profits	38,601	39,836	50,734	631,304
Bingley (Airedale District)	Education Grant	105 (0.77%)	85 (0.70%)	92 (0.65%)	2,398 (1.31%)
	Net Profits	13,661	12,129	14,079	183,429
Churwell (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	20 (1.14%)	20 (1.05%)	25 (1.38%)	546 (1.55%)
	Net Profits	1,751	1,913	1,808	35,162
Cleckheaton (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	353 (2.13%)	375 (2.18%)	393 (2.18%)	6,381 (2.38%)
	Net Profits	16,572	17,213	18,001	268,625
Doncaster (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	290 (1.37%)	251 (1.31%)	246 (1.30%)	3,100 (1.42%)
	Net Profits	21,224	19,221	18,863	218,274
Kilnhurst (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	36 (1.00%)	36 (1.93%)	36 (0.85%)	656 (1.29%)
	Net Profits	3,604	3,869	4,225	50,748
Masbro' (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	158 (1.00%)	181 (1.05%)	252 (1.52%)	2,248 (1.17%)
	Net Profits	15,846	17,270	16,592	192,011
Morley Industrial (Dewsbury District)	Education Grant	521 (2.51%)	438 (1.40%)	428 (1.57%)	6,821 (1.97%)
	Net Profits	20,721	31,202	27,263	345,673
Stocksbridge (S.Yorks District)	Education Grant	60 (0.50%)	60 (0.50%)	30 (0.24%)	980 (0.76%)
	Net Profits	11,898	12,253	12,684	138,496
Todmorden (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	436 (1.78%)	396 (1.58%)	402 (1.57%)	9,802 (2.12%)
	Net Profits	24,555	25,110	25,587	461,396
Hebden Bridge Indus. (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	283 (2.50%)	295 (2.10%)	308 (2.09%)	3,988 (2.08%)
	Net Profits	11,331	14,027	14,737	191,112
Keighley (Airedale District)	Education Grant	273 (0.83%)	365 (1.13%)	354 (1.02%)	4,515 (1.08%)
	Net Profits	32,919	32,370	34,621	416,145
Mytholmroyd (Calderdale District)	Education Grant	53 (1.98%)	55 (2.00%)	50 (2.03%)	1,059 (2.13%)
	Net Profits	2,678	2,752	2,466	49,763
Leeds (Airedale District)	Education Grant	1,367 (0.68%)	1,459 (0.68%)	1,606 (0.68%)	14,829 (0.69%)
	Net Profits	200,571	214,500	235,890	2,139,560

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901

a "why should we bother" attitude prevailed. It is clear from the above statistical summary that not one society in Yorkshire was adhering to the Rochdale advice to spend 2½% of net surplus on education.

When one looks at the individual efforts of particular societies then the statistical summary is confirmed. Few societies in the early years of their development had specific rules enabling them to grant a percentage of their profits to education. Generally a society was expected to achieve a sound financial base before the committee would recommend making grants to education. The Castleford society at no expense to themselves, asked their members to read the:

> "Co-op paper so that you may learn the true basis of Co-operation in respect to the elevation of society. They would also ask as a favour the gifts of Books from those who can spare so that they may be able shortly to open the committee room as a reading room".[1]

At Barnsley a reading room was established eight years after the formation of the society, and in 1885 the society resolved to grant 1% of its net profits to education. The Barnsley library grew steadily and by 1886 contained 2,334 volumes and by 1888 this figure had increased to 4,500 with 1,000 volumes being issued per week.[2] Reading rooms were also established and by 1902 they existed at Barnsley, Wombwell, Holyland, Chapeltown, Swinton, Mapplewell and West Melton. Recent research shows that the vast majority of books issued in co-operative reading rooms were fiction.[3] Co-operative text books were well used by a mere handful of activists, with the majority of members more interested in a 'good read' rather than intellectual stimulation as recommended by Toynbee and other co-operative educationalists. Indeed, after a hard days work, books of fiction could serve as a welcome form of escape from the harsh realities of the real world.

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1. Handwritten notes dated 1865 (quote contains original spelling). Now deposited at Yorkshire Region CRS, Education Department, Huddersfield.
2. 6,000 books by 1891 and 12,585 by 1902.
3. Research currently being undertaken by the Librarian of the Co-operative Union, Mr. R. Garrett.

Lectures and evening classes were run by a number of societies. The more ambitious involved the "University Extension Scheme". This scheme was fostered by Professor Stuart (Cambridge) and A.H.D. Acland (Oxford) and involved a number of societies in a particular area in carrying out a system of education amongst themselves, by uniting and engaging teachers, who would travel from one society to another, and that they should form in that way something akin to a peripatetic university. Stuart in particular was keen to get higher education brought into the reach of everyone in the country.[1] Teachers would go from one place to another, carrying with them the apparatus needed, and thus give those attending the lectures a succession of capable teachers.

During 1884 a series of lectures was given at Heckmondwike and Dewsbury. The subjects covered and the names of the lecturers were: Astronomical Discovery: the Law of Gravitation" by E.J.C. Martin MA, St. John's College; "The Voice at the Ear" by Alex Hill MA, MB, Downing College, and "Political Economy and the Democracy" by H.S. Foxwell, MA, St. John's College.[2] This preliminary course was a precursor to a number that were held in the county and probably the most successful were held in Hebden Bridge in the early part of 1889 when the Rev. W. Hudson Shaw delivered a course of 9 lectures on "English History". The attendance figures increased from 300 to 700[3] and as a direct result of this series of lectures a reading circle of working men and others under the leadership of the Rev. C.T. Wakefield was established.[4]

A number of societies did however organise their own courses and the establishment of the North Western Co-operative Education Committees' Association in the Session 1886-87 did, through the holding of regular meetings and conferences, develop greater unity amongst societies, and the opportunity of reviewing what was going on in other societies was

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1. The courses would cost £45 each per class, consist of twelve lectures extended over twelve weeks, the correction of all papers sent in, and examination and certificates at the end. Co-operative News, July 28th, 1883, p 671.
2. Co-operative News, February 2nd, 1884, p 93.
3. Co-operative News, July 27th, 1889, p 806.
4. 15 members meeting every two weeks.

a valuable advance.[1] The Barnsley society held their own lectures and evening continuation schools, provided a series of public lessons in sick nursing and cookery, science, bookkeeping, geography, english, shorthand, hygiene and needlework. Smaller societies like Mytholmroyd utilized the teaching skills of their members and local experts e.g. Mr. Abraham Crossley from Todmorden taught electricity, sound light and heat; Mr. T. Stonehouse gave lessons in geology. At Masbro' the society held lectures at the Mechanics Institute.

> "Rev. Professor Armitage, pastor of the Rotherham Congregational Church, gave fifth lecture promoted by the Masbro' Co-op title "The Pyramids and Other Tombs of Egypt" - beautifully illustrated by Oxy-hydrogen lamplight."[2]

One society, New Mills adopted a different course by handing over responsibility to the Mechanics Institute for all educational matters. Therefore in 1882 the grant of £9.13s. enabled the society to elect thirty two of their members to be members of the institute at 6s. each.[3]

The proud record of the minority of societies is tarnished somewhat by the very poor record of the majority. Holyoake in his distinctive style refers to the first attempts to provide an education fund at Leeds and the open hostility of one gentleman who declared in the broadest dialect of the locality: "We want no eddication, give us a bonus".[4] In 1894 the Birstall society resolved to set aside 1½% of profits quarterly for educational provision. However a petition was signed by 43 members calling for a special meeting to consider this decision. At the subsequent meeting, by an overwhelming majority, the members rescinded the resolution passed at the quarterly meeting.[5] This decision

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1. Operated under auspices of the Co-operative Union Ltd.
2. Co-operative News, March 28th, 1885, p 273.
3. The tickets being balloted for.
4. G.J. Holyoake, Leeds Industrial Co-operative Society, Ltd. 1847-1897, (Manchester, 1897), p 89.
5. Co-operative News, January 26th, 1895, p 89.

was well reported and the Co-operative Union in due course sought to discuss the Educational question with the society. At a quarterly meeting of the society held in 1896 the question was considered whether a special meeting should be convened for the purpose of "receiving and hearing" a deputation from the Co-operative Union.[1] The motion was duly moved and seconded and then a member called Mr. Dansfield opposed the motion and maintained that it was unjust to some members and moved that the matter be adjourned for ten years. This rather crude motion was apparently cheered by many at the meeting. Another member by the name of Mr. Joseph Martin felt that members of the society were "old enough to know what they were doing, and it was a strange thing that they should want strangers to come there to teach them". The opponents were very forceful in their condemnation of education and the President felt that the arguments used tended "to abundantly prove that they wanted education". He then took the vote and it was found that the "ayes" numbered 52 and the "noes" numbered 52 - therefore as the resolution did not have the required two thirds majority the Co-operative Union deputation was not allowed to visit the society. This incident shows the opposition to educational provision and also the strong independent mode of operation. No outside body could expect a hearing automatically in Birstall, and that included the Co-operative Union - the Movement's central advisory body.

A number of societies ended educational donations if profits dipped and anything that reduced the dividend was viewed with apprehension. Many questioned the wisdom of using part of the net profit especially when the town already possessed school boards, science classes and free libraries. Why supplement these public agencies by private contributions? - these kind of questions were raised by many members. Even those societies that did contribute were, towards the end of the century, handing over their libraries to local authorities. The Co-operative News highlighted one notable transfer in 1897 involving the Todmorden Industrial society.[2] The society presented to the inhabitants of the newly incorporated borough a Free Library. The Library contained

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1. Co-operative News, July 25th, 1896, p 785.
2. The hand over coincided with the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Todmorden Industrial Society in 1896

8,500 volumes, the ground upon which the library was built was freehold and cost £1,000, and the building, which was new, cost approximately £3,000. In handing over the deeds of the building Alderman Jackson, president of the society stated:

> "On behalf of the Co-operative Society I have pleasure in handing over the title deeds of the library to the custody of the Mayor of Todmorden trusting that the corporation would keep the building and its contents in such a state as the object for which it was built demanded, and if the public benefited by its use the society would be amply repaid for their trouble and expense".[1]

Active debate did therefore take place in a number of societies on the educational issue. However, this process did not take place in many other societies because as no contributions were ever made, or considered, there was no reason to give it any attention. This section has shown that education did not play the significant role that has been presupposed in the past. There were excellent schemes introduced by a number of societies but in the vast majority of cases the part played by education was a minor one. Many societies did little to promote the ideals and principles of the Movement and as in a number of other areas of growth economic considerations were regarded as being paramount. Towards the end of the century the activists were abandoning to public authorities the evening schools and technical classes and more emphasis was being placed on initiating the specific co-operative education which is the basis of the Movement's education work today.[2] Idealists like Toynbee and Stuart must have been disappointed at the lack of progress made and might have agreed with H.G. Wells that "The human mind is an instrument very easily fatigued. Only a few exceptions go on thinking restlessly - to the extreme exasperation of their neighbours."[3] The Co-operative Union worked hard to expand educational facilities but

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1. Co-operative News, 4th December, 1897, p 1326.
2. Trying to involve people in the activities of the society, running courses for committee members, acting as public relations departments.
3. H.G. Wells, War and the Future, (1917), pp 182-3.

even they could not force societies to act. What did happen is that sectional education committees were established under the auspices of the Co-operative Union to co-ordinate action. However the payment of a subscription to the Co-operative Union was conscience money to many societies keen to rid themselves of any direct involvement.

SOCIAL WELFARE

In the field of social welfare co-operative societies showed their communal response to matters that not only concerned individual co-operators but the community in which they traded.[1] The Co-operative working class solution to the problems faced by their members was one of mutual protection, in some cases from cradle to grave. This was not a paternalistic response, for membership carried responsibilities and obligations to an organisation that was made up predominantly from their friends, workmates and neighbours. The co-operative established in a particular area was an integral part of the local community and thus the fortunes of a society and the local community were inseparably linked.

One of the major areas in which societies assisted their individual members was in health provision. By the regular payment of subscriptions to local hospitals co-operative societies in Yorkshire were able to give their members additional protection in the days before a comprehensive health service was available. At Heckmondwike subscriptions were paid to the Leeds Infirmary, the Bradford Eye Hospital and the Bradford Infirmary.[2] Additional insurance cover meant a lot to ordinary members especially in the case of a society like Grosmont:

> "The committee recommended the members at the General Meeting to renew their subscription to the York Hospital. They thought that as the workmen in the village and vicinity were employed in dangerous works it was thought it would not be much for members to have two ports open in case of emergency".[3]

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1. They often contributed to appeals from other parts of the country e.g. colliery disaster funds, life boat appeals, etc.
2. Co-operative News, April 12th, 1884, p 317.
3. Minute Book, Grosmont Society, Tuesday, April 29th, 1891.

Membership of federal organisations like the C.W.S. would also give societies the opportunity of securing additional hospital treatment if required. It was also a common practice for societies to provide sick appliances that could be loaned to members when needed. This facility often being placed under the supervision of education committees.[1] Grants would also be made in a number of cases to local first aid groups and to the St. John's Ambulance Association.[2]

The introduction of a "safety net" in respect of hospital treatment was an obvious advantage to ordinary co-operators and followed closely the autonomous working class tradition, uninfluenced by outside propaganda. Another function that generated a sense of belonging to a broader and community based organisation was the holding of "Trips" and "Teas", Trips to the coast or a stately home became a common feature of co-operative growth.[3] Trips allowed the members and their families, some possibly for the first time in their lives, the opportunity to escape from their normal routine and to explore new horizons. At Mytholmroyd the half-yearly meeting held in April 1877 the "Trip Question" was high on the agenda for discussion, and the choice of venue inevitably involved members exercising their democratic rights:

> "that we have a trip to Chatsworth House. Other places proposed and votes cast Chatsworth 30 votes, Blackpool 2 votes, Morecambe 4 votes, Hull 10 votes, Whitby 4 votes".[4]

Teas would be held to celebrate the anniversary of a society or to mark a specific occasion. At Leeds the society even combined the Tea meeting with raising money for the hospital: "that we have a tea meeting to be held in the town hall in the month of September or

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1. Even in 1986 some societies still provide this service to members in addition to death grants.
2. Co-operative News, July 27th, 1889, p 799. recorded that the Cleckheaton society paid £2 2s annually to the funds of the local association and agreed to defray the cost of a "stretcher" or hand ambulance cart of the best quality.
3. Staff often being invited to join the party.
4. Half Yearly Meeting, Mytholmroyd Society, April 19th, 1877, Resolution Nine.

October in aid of the funds of the public dispensary."[1] In addition celebrations would also be held by societies when they opened a new store and a local brass band would often be called upon to lead the procession. These social activities generated a strong bond and were regarded as important by societies keen to promote their unique social and economic difference. The York society's charitable, other subscriptions and grants for 1909 are shown in Appendix 8-3. The majority of money was devoted to hospital provision. But the directors could also make grants from the Relief Fund in cases of temporary distress through loss of employment. A £1 subscription to the International Co-operative Alliance was a recognition, if only a small one, that their society was not merely a national, but an international movement. Local benefits for local people was the general criterion adopted.

The "community purpose" shown by many societies affected the growth of the Movement in the nineteenth century. Societies took seriously their duty to serve their members and create the correct environment in which further growth and development could take place. The economic progress of societies was closely linked with the social and economic conditions prevailing in the different trading areas. Industrial disputes, trade depression, the fortunes of local industries would all affect the progress of societies. In Bradford during late 1890 and early 1891 a prolonged strike at Manningham Mills seriously affected many of the society's members.[2] The directors of the society resolved to allow members at the Silk Street and Heaton Syke stores to obtain credit on goods purchased. However legal advice indicated that this course of action was not possible and thus the society resolved to place voluntary subscription boxes prominently in the shops of the society to assist their members in distress. Changes in the local environment would often have profound consequences on the financial stability of societies. The Barnsley British society, with miners making up two-thirds of its membership, suffered a drain on share capital during the 1893 miners lock-out. The fall in share capital is shown below:

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1. General Board Meeting, Leeds Society, August 9th, 1859.
2. Bradford Congress Souvenir, 1911, p 146.

Year	Share Capital
1890	£170,092
1891	£204,958
1892	£237,389
1893	£253,287
1894	£245,874
1895	£268,912

This dispute started on 29th July 1893 and lasted 16 weeks. On September 25th 1893 a special meeting of members was held to consider the desirability of the society making a special grant from the reserve fund to alleviate the distress.[1] £250 per week was granted for four weeks, and on 20th October the committee made another grant of £250 per week for a further 4 week period. To help the suffering from the dispute additional help was given to local soup kitchens and other relief agencies. £67,456 8s was paid out that half year, this being equal to a quarter of the society's share capital. After the struggle money flowed back into the society and their standing in the community was greatly enhanced as a result of this serious dispute.[2]

Societies responded in a positive way to help their members whenever financial circumstances permitted. In the case of the Grosmont society immense problems were experienced when in 1891 the mines in the area were closed and the three blast furnaces ceased to function.[3] Hardship and depression descended upon the village. Many inhabitants moved to find work in the industrial areas of Durham and in a matter of weeks membership dropped from 322 to 196 and share capital from £1,641 to £769. Fresh board elections had to be held when two committeemen had to leave Grosmont to find work elsewhere. The depressed conditions lasted a long time for in late 1892 the minute book shows:

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1. Jubilee History of Barnsley British Society (Manchester, 1903), p. 97.
2. The miners returned to work at the old rate of wages.
3. Most families in the village earned their livelihood from employment in the ironstone mines.

"... cases for relief were brought forward. Patterson, Tates and A. Smith Eskdaleside. In Pattersons case it was decided to give them sufficient to pay their fare out of the village, which cost us 4/-. Tates, it was mentioned were hungering and it was decided to give them 2/6 worth of goods, also if they would leave the village to pay train fare. Smith of Eskdaleside who was very ill and in urgent relief that we gave him 5/- in goods".[1]

Although the Movement had lost a lot of its vitality the effects of its growth conferred enormous advantages, both economic and social, on hundreds of thousands of Yorkshire people. This working class solution, as indicated in the opening statement, shows the depth and vitality of its culture, coupled with its autonomy and its essentially communal and egalitarian character.

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1. Committee Meeting, Grosmont Society, Tuesday, November 8th, 1892.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

PART ONE

Part One of this concluding chapter brings together the main findings of this thesis about the capitalist tendencies of co-operators, the class heterogeneity of the Movement, the out-moded Rochdale Model and localism.

The capitalist involvement of the working-classes in the Co-operative Movement has been shown throughout this thesis. Immediate benefits had more intrinsic appeal than grand aspirations and this is evident from the Kirkheaton "close corportion" of the 1830's through to the closing years of the century when approaching fifty percent of all Yorkshire societies were paying dividend to their members at a rate of 3/- to 4/- in the pound. Two thirds of co-operative investments went outside the Movement with over fifty percent invested in house property. The desire to own a house was in the main preferred to investing in a co-operative productive undertaking where the benefits would be long term and, for ordinary members, difficult to comprehend in economic or social terms. The model of co-operative development fashioned by the Rochdale Pioneers, utilizing as they did many of the basic guidelines laid down by Yorkshiremen, offered a radical alternative to Capitalism but did not develop beyond mere shopkeeping. By the 1860's more and more people in positions of influence could confidently support the granting of the vote to working men because they would use it for the maintenance of time honoured institutions - Co-operation appealed directly to their immediate self-interest.

Robert Owen, the rich industrialist, was the first theorist and advocate of Co-operation in the nineteenth century. Owen helps to show the diverse elements that went towards shaping the Co-operative Movement. Early support for his schemes came from the Duke of Kent, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the pioneers of trade unionism and show the class heterogeneity of the Movement. Co-operatives attracted support from a wide cross section of opinion, for a variety of different reasons. Certain employers would help to establish societies

as an antidote to industrial conflict as in the case of the Ironmasters Fox and Head, whilst for Joseph Hirst, the fancy woollen Manufacturer of Meltham, benevolence would have been the main motive. The detailed survey undertaken of the Mytholmroyd society shows that a person's social standing did not militate against sharing in the benefits of co-operative membership. The society drew support from all classes within the community and significantly amongst the unskilled workers. Co-operative societies throughout the county were a microcosm of the entire community. Class distinctions in Yorkshire towns and villages were much more fragmented and fluid than a simple model (e.g. capitalists versus proletarians) would suggest, so one can see how a socially useful institution might draw support from a wide spectrum of society.

This thesis recognises the important role played by the Rochdale Pioneers who had shown what was feasible when people combined their energies in a collective fashion. But many groups utilized the Lancashire experience to shape their own co-operative to meet their own local requirements. Each separate retail society remained free, within the constraints of its rule book and the law, to determine its own policy and path of development. Sufficient local demand was generally all that was required to secure a deviation from the national model. In the field of credit it has been found that the majority of societies did not follow the model, even though there was a strong belief then and now that it was in force. Credit was granted in the majority of cases in proportion to capital holdings. Likewise the majority of societies chose not to participate in the area of educational provision. Not one society in Yorkshire, and only a handful nationally were adhering to the Rochdale advice to spend 2½ per cent of net surplus on education. Even the sale of alcoholic beverages would be granted if there was a significant local demand. The Rochdale society established a model that was used by societies keen for advice, but in practice societies followed their own form of development that recognised the importance of local considerations and practices.

Strong local pressures cannot be ignored in any analysis of co-operative origins and development. Local interests appeared to be

a noticeable force operating within societies and this is highlighted by the diverse characteristics of the early societies. Societies in general terms would put their local interest before that of any central body, hence the poor support often given to the wholesale society and the poor response in heeding resolutions passed at Congress. Even the apparent novel system of "dividend" probably derives from local customs such as the "badger" - the itinerant salesman repaying money to customers when shopping bills had been settled. Societies developed in a unique fashion, owing their existence to local circumstances and modes of behaviour.

Nineteenth century co-operators certainly exploited the changing economic and social conditions of the century to the benefit of their members. The prominence of the dividend in explaining this success was evidently great. The kind of economic base, energised by the dividend, also constrained the ways in which the Movement could proceed and may have been a cause of the weakness of radical thought and action. This point was poignantly made in Chapter Eight by a member of the Leeds society who declared in the broadest dialect of the locality, "we want no eddication give us a bonus". Co-operative members were on the whole very loyal but in general added nothing to the broader range of co-operative ideals.

There were then a number of essential points that contributed towards co-operative success, ranging from factors associated with the scale of retailing to those based on the goals and values of ordinary working people. Prevailing conditions, both economic and social, meant that the optimum economic scale of co-operative retailing was in harmony with local part-time leadership by dedicated amateurs. These practical men were prepared to take a new look at the consumer and stumbled, more or less by chance, on modern methods of retail distribution - vertical integration and the branch system. A mass membership was achieved by the simple offering of gain in the form of the dividend, coupled with a guarantee of quality, credit when required, conveniently situated and stocked shops and a place where their surplus funds could be deposited and readily available if needed.

It is clear that many of the leaders of the Movement had different goals and values from the mass in that their rewards were enhanced status, a sense of a social task accomplished and for some a realisation of socialist co-operative ideals.

In organisational terms the Co-operative Wholesale Society and the Co-operative Union provided economic and ideological underpinning but above all were creative innovations which by doing no more than offer, not insist on, Co-operation with and between local societies, were both compatible with localism and the emphasis on the autonomy of societies and, in the case of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, the economies of large-scale wholesaling. The nineteenth century Movement had its origins in collectivist ideas but it prospered as a form of 'collective capitalism' which was in harmony with the predominantly individualistic goals and values of working people at the time. The co-operative located itself in the minds of the people - it was the shop of the people in that area.

PART TWO

Part Two of this chapter briefly reviews the radical changes in retailing since the 1950's. The purpose of using the present is to throw light on the earlier history of the societies. What was it then and what is it now? Over the past quarter of a century a marked decline in the fortunes of the Co-operative Movement has been experienced. If the co-operative retail sector had maintained its 1960 market share its annual turnover today would be around £8 billion rather than £4 billion. However, the relative decline began as recently as the 1950's so the 'old order' was remarkably successful well beyond the Victorian era in which it developed. The causes of the present state of the Movement can be distinguished as those that are external and those that originate in its own history. However, any analysis of co-operative development and growth must not lose sight of the fact that without the minority of 'activists', whether they were idealists or men of enlightened self-interest, or a bit of both, the nineteenth century growth would not have occurred. Yet the latter-day successors of those activists have become prime obstacles to change.

One of the most serious charges that can be levelled against the co-operatives is their failure to keep abreast of modern retailing methods. The rise in the importance of multiple shop retailing in the total national retail trade in the inter-war years was due largely to the successful extension of this form of trading to goods other than food. The co-operative societies increased their share of the national food trade, but with food representing a smaller proportion of total consumer retail expenditure and the failure of the Movement to make substantial headway in the trades other than food, the rate of progress of societies in the retail trade as a whole was slower than that of the multiple shop organisations. In the inter-war period fundamental changes were taking place within the private retailing sector. The development of bigger branches, more expensive sites, expensive fittings increased the demand for fixed capital. During this period a large number of multiple shop firms became public limited liability companies and raised capital for expansion on the open market. By 1950 some 70-80% of the total number of branches of firms with 25 or more branches each were controlled by public companies.

Despite a small number of problem societies, many co-operative societies of the 1920's and 1930's were efficient retailers whose standards matched those of the competition. They also possessed a further advantage, which played a key role, in their continued success, namely resale price maintenance (R.P.M.). Price competition was hardly known in the days when R.P.M. was a central feature of retail distribution. Gross margins were substantial, and the rate of net profit was significantly greater than the case today. Co-operatives were thus able to pay relatively high rates of dividend, whereas competitors, whose prices were broadly similar had no such inducements to offer. Neither private traders nor manufacturers were content with this situation, and various attempts were made to withhold supplies from societies. The growth in the range of CWS productions, at this time was in part a response to this attitude on the part of manufacturers. The Movement was thus able to behave as a true champion of consumer interests throughout the years of the depression. This proud record is well recorded in minute books and articles of the period. As was the case in the nineteenth century, downturns in the economy saw the local society assisting the unfortunate casualties.

Retail competition was virtually frozen throughout the period of the second world war by a comprehensive rationing system and widespread price controls which operated, and which was not finally removed until the 1950's. It was in the post-war years that the Co-operative Movement began to lose impetus and other consumer champions began to emerge. A number of retailers campaigned against retail price maintenance, and gained public support by cutting retail prices, particularly on groceries, despite strong opposition from manufacturers. Resale price maintenance was eventually abolished in the early 1960's and with it went high rates of co-operative profits. New competitors and new forms of retailing in the self service store and the supermarket began to change the fundamental nature of selling in the high streets of British towns. Centrally controlled and directed private multiples, without the structural encumbrances of co-operatives, were able to move quickly and decisively to satisfy changing public demand. Greater social mobility, the motor car, refrigerators and freezers, out of town shopping, the translation of retailing from being a community based activity, as mentioned in Chapter Six, to a media based activity all encouraged customers to adopt purchasing patterns more appropriate to the changed environment.

The Co-operative Movement's difficulties lie more in a failure to take speedy action than in some inability to suggest solutions. This is reflected in the fact that there have been many proposals for changing the way the Movement functions in order to meet the changing retail and social challenge. The first major call for adaptation was made eighty years ago by J.C. Gray. Gray in his 1906 Congress Address advanced a plan for the establishment of one national society instead of the twelve hundred or so that existed at the time of his address. He went beyond accepted limits and proposed a radical Co-operative Movement to supersede capitalism, organised in one national society dedicated to maximising growth and gaining control of distribution and the consumption goods industries. The mechanism was the appropriation of half the profits of the Movement as a fund of development capital inaccessible to members. The investment of this capital in co-operative societies would, according to the Congress President, obtain unity of purpose and aim; prevent overlapping; achieve the centralisation of

purchasing power; accumulate capital to be used more extensively in the field of co-operative production; and spread Co-operation in districts where societies were weak and at the mercy of their opponents. The Gray plan although not pursued by societies, who would at this time have been achieving net profit figures well in excess of 10%, was however very significant in that it recognised the problem, indeed the folly,of distributing excessive amounts of profits, and also showed the realisation that highly efficient competitors were entering the retailing sector and as a result the Movement would have to plan carefully its future strategy. Most of the points raised by Gray would reappear in other proposals for change but only in terms of structural change; little if any reference would be made to the desire to expand co-operative activity. Indeed, later generations would be more interested in the process of survival, not expansion.

Over 50 years after Gray's address the Movement was reaching its high point in terms of its share of the total retail trade but the pace and progress of the multiple retailers was now causing acute concern.[1] A commission was established to investigate the state of the Movement and to recommend the kind of action required to put it back on course. The commission was chaired by the Labour Party leader Hugh Gaitskell and its secretary was Anthony Crosland. When its report was published in 1958 the commission criticised the conservatism and complacency of the Movement and the duplication of societies which resulted in an inability to streamline and rationalise the number and distribution of its shops, its other capital assets and its managerial personnel with the object of serving the market with the minimum use of resources. However the commission's most damning criticism of the Movement concerned the distribution of disposable surplus. Societies were ploughing back a far smaller proportion of their surplus, and their retained income financed a far lower proportion of their capital expenditure.

The main recommendation of the commission was to establish a new federal structure, a Co-operative Retail Development Society (C.R.D.S.). Its functions were to be research, advice and the initiation of developments.

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1. In 1957 the Co-operative Market share is estimated to have reached its highest figure - 11.9%.

Very little came of this proposal and the same can be said for others that followed in its wake. Regional Plan One in 1968 resolved to create 50 Regional societies; Regional Plan Two in 1974 proposed creating 26 Regional societies; A call to establish a national society (Co-operative G.B.) was made in 1979; At the 1982 Congress delegates approved by a 7 to 1 majority a plan to reduce the number of societies to 25 within a period of two years. The capacity to produce credible propositions had increased in line with the serious plight of the Movement.

The reluctance of independent societies to contemplate merging into larger units contrasts sharply with the developments of two specific organisations established in the inter-war period. Co-operative Retail Services (C.R.S.) and CWS Retail Branches (Scotland) were intended to perform two main tasks. The first was to carry Co-operation into "desert" areas which were neither claimed nor cultivated by any local society. The second was to act as a defence of last resort against the danger that Co-operation might, through the failure of a local society, disappear altogether from a particular area. This was the traditional ambulance role and these bodies stood ready, when all else failed, to take over and attempt to rehabilitate any bankrupt or struggling society. In the case of C.R.S. their "ambulance" role has made them the largest co-operative retail society in Britain, representing 22% of co-operative turnover nationally and in Yorkshire the figure has risen steadily since the war and now stands at 37%. Mytholmroyd, after a run of poor results, joined C.R.S. in 1968, ten years after Huddersfield, and a year later were joined by Meltham Mills.[1] Ripponden transferred its engagements to Sowerby Bridge in 1964 and four years later this society went into liquidation. Only 13 independent societies remain in Yorkshire. The number of mergers between societies which were not a consequence of commercial necessity is however very small; indeed many delay taking a decision in the knowledge that the C.R.S. or CWS "safety net" will always be available.

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1. Barnsley joined C.R.S. in 1971, Halifax in 1964 and Hull in 1981.

The attempt to create a structure that will meet the economic requirements of modern retailing has also thrown open the question as to whether the Co-operative Movement can contribute distinctive services beyond those being offered by private retailers. In nearly all voluntary organisations, especially co-operatives, the Labour Party, trade unions and building societies an ever increasing degree of remoteness has entered the picture. The apparent inability to alter the decisions of large organisations, that by their very nature are large in scale and complex in organisation, inhibits that sense of belonging that characterised such bodies in their formative years. How can an individual member meaningfully direct a business that covers an area of many thousands of square miles? How can a member participate in framing policy when highly paid and qualified officials are engaged full-time in retailing? How can an ordinary member grasp problems associated with cash-flow, gross profits, return on capital and complex industrial relations legislation? Many potential recruits into the retail Movement have understandably been intimidated by these obstacles and thus the degree of direct involvement has fallen consistently since the Second World War.

Most people are less interested in doctrine than the results of doctrine. Without the dividend to attract people into the Movement the Co-operative Union through its Education Department has tried to bridge the gap between the local society and the local community in which they trade. It has been recognised by the department that people have their own ideas, needs and interests and if the co-operatives can go out and take an interest in them and at the same time show them that through the co-operative they can help themselves, through mutual aid, then these people will hopefully begin to take an interest in the co-operative. Projects such as the "Community Award Scheme" and the "Schools Art Contest" are seen as moves in getting the Movement back to grass-roots. Also finding increased favour with societies is the concept of the "Social Dividend". This plan utilizes the dividend in a collective fashion. Instead of handing out 'divi' in the form of dividend stamps to millions of members, lump sum payments are made to groups or institutions in thelocal community who are benefiting the community as a whole, e.g. the purchase of a kidney machine for a hospital or buying

equipment for a youth club. By the fostering of such links with other community groups it is hoped to revitalize the Movement's image and recruit members already active in community work.

However the solution to the problem almost certainly rests on firm economic grounds. In a retail society you must attract people into stores that compare favourably with the main multiple competitors. Only by keeping abreast of modern retailing methods can the co-operatives hope to survive. Indeed, it is not impossible for the Movement to become efficient retailers who in addition can offer the consumer the opportunity of participating in an organisation that is responsive to their modern day requirements. Modern technology might enable societies to reintroduce a form of discount for their members only. By adopting methods designed to make the most effective use of managerial, human, financial and material resources and by encouraging consumer awareness the co-operatives are trying to offer a distinctive service as was the case in their early formative years.

When attention is drawn to the strengths of the old order then it is evident that certain aspects later became barriers to change. These causes can broadly be defined as those that originate in its own history. Chapters Five and Seven have shown the important part played by committees. Committees responded to the desires of their members, with local autonomy and control being very important characteristics of the Movement. However, as indicated in the opening remarks of this section, these very activists in this century have become a conservative force and must take much of the blame for the current position.the Movement is in. The need to merge into larger units has been recognised for over 25 years and advocated by some for nearly 80 years. Yet even when all the facts pointed overwhelmingly to a merger situation many committees remained unconvinced that this policy applied to their own society. At numerous Congress gatherings, many held at pleasant holiday resorts, national speakers would advance convincing reasons for closer union and receive a large vote in favour from delegates. These very same delegates would then go back to their respective societies and conveniently ignore the merger rationale. Unfortunately most directors are motivated by personal considerations and consequently the

well-being of their societies is of secondary importance. Few directors of retail societies seek election for financial gain, the monetary rewards being generally only nominal in relation to the time absorbed by their duties. However, the status conferred by election to a board of directors is very real, as is the power vested in each board.

It has certainly been the reluctance of individual boards to surrender their powers which has been the principal obstacle to regionalisation. The seat of power is at the very centre of the problem. Power has always been on the periphery of the Co-operative Movement, never at the centre. For generations we have had a situation where the central institutions of the Movement - the Co-operative Union, the C.W.S. and the Co-operative Congress - have never had the leverage for effective action. No matter what was proposed at the centre, autonomous co-operative societies delighted in and relished the freedom to do what they liked.

The attributes of society officials in the development phase of the Movement have been recorded in earlier chapters and contrast starkly with many twentieth century trends. The selection of many senior managers reflects the very conservative nature of committees. Societies have for generations chosen to appoint as chief officials men who were "safe" rather than enterprising. Men schooled in old techniques were reluctant, and often incapable of changing old established policies. A "whizz-kid" would not get past the first interview stage. It must be recognised that it is amongst the senior officials of societies that redundancies are most likely to occur following a merger. It is at the level of management that duplication arises following a merger, particularly at the level of chief officer, and not surprisingly many chief officials are reluctant to advise their committees to contemplate regionalisation when, as a consequence, their own jobs would be threatened. Co-operative mandarins have developed the art of delaying the day of reckoning until the storm clouds of insolvency appear on the horizon. The same mandarins are then the first to criticise the painful consequences of restructuring which leave many casualties.

The societies' use of the dividend to satisfy the economic aspirations of their members was very well in the days of large and effortless annual increases in members' capital, and when the Movement's competitors were less expansion minded. But this approach could not be pursued when the retailing environment changed. Local societies were, however, still prepared to use the dividend as a buttress against changing conditions, in that whilst high dividends remained societies could continue trading in inferior locations and still rely on healthy patronage. Society committees, conditioned by local considerations, were reluctant to lower dividends in line with reduced profits and this resulted in the proportion of societies profits paid to members increasing and retentions, the principal source of development capital, dwindling and in some cases disappearing altogether.

In the past 25 years the Movement has lost over half its market share. Although many small uneconomical shops have been closed this has not been accompanied by a corresponding and comprehensive exercise of redevelopment as undertaken by the private multiples. The average size of co-operative outlets is below 2000 square feet compared with a Tesco average of over 10,000 square feet. Thus the co-operatives cannot take full advantage of the economies of scale which exist in larger shops and there is an increasing amount of evidence which suggests that the achievement of such economies is vital if a retailer is to compete effectively. Coupled with the drawbacks associated with such a shop profile, a fragmented organisational structure also adds to the internal problems facing the Movement. There are still 100 separate autonomous, legally independent societies each with their own objectives and policies and their own teams of management and administrative operations. Many societies are thus too small to employ all the highly skilled people a modern business demands. The need for a coherent trading image has been recognised for a long time but even if one was development then the Movement needs for its survival more modern shops but again this is beyond the financial and managerial resources of small societies. Committee members have again in many cases been guilty of standing in the way of the drive towards modern retail methods. Not only have they rejected the merger rationale, but they have also shown a reluctance to

adhere to a format that will create casualties, namely the closure of small uneconomical shops. For a Movement that prides itself in both caring and sharing the question of trading through smaller shops is a real problem because it is often the disadvantaged, the immobile, who are likely to need such localized facilities, and the social conscience is pricked. Yet the Movement is socially owned in a trade dominated by private enterprise and can only propound successfully its social commitment if it can achieve economic and trading success also.

The retail Co-operative Movement in Britain is in the middle of a crisis of both economic and social magnitude. Institutional conservatism has certainly restricted the development of the Movement. Social idealism although always evident has never been able to shackle the desire of members for immediate economic gain - a cash nexus philosophy has always held the upper hand. The drive towards economic rationalization is still being impeded by factors that are parochial in character. Dividends are almost a thing of the past but local autonomy and control are still able to direct attention away from sound economic policies. Whether or not there is still a sufficient base upon which to rebuild the Co-operative Movement nationally is debatable, but it is abundantly clear that in economic terms restructuring is now imperative. Collectively the Movement may still have sufficient asset strength to carry through the necessary reconstruction, but whether or not it has the will to rationalize its structure - the fundamental prerequisite - is doubtful.

Co-operative retail societies are no longer the pioneers of retail change. Change today is being forced upon the Movement by competitors able and willing to offer retailing facilities appropriate to a more discerning and sophisticated public. Indeed the raison d'etre for co-operative retailing is a lot harder to establish today. This is highlighted by the numerous schemes for survival and methods designed to distinguish it from private enterprise. Gray's Inaugural Address showed his awareness of the need for change and he concluded by stating the course he wished followed:

"Of one thing I am convinced - that if, in your wisdom, you think fit to adopt this wider and grander conception of co-operative ideas and methods, it will be found that we are but yet on the threshold of our great work, and there will be opened for our Movement such a sphere of activity and usefulness the results of which will make all our previous efforts, great though they may be, pale into insignificance.

Then may we go forward towards the realisation of a true co-operative state or commonwealth, wherein justice and equity shall rule; where industry in all its forms shall receive its just rewards; where homes shall be made healthy and happy; where all the comforts of life may be enjoyed by those who have earned them; and where the poor and oppressed may be uplifted and find rest, and misery and want be banished from our land."[1]

Societies represented at the 1906 Congress chose not to develop a more comprehensive co-operative sector as recommended by Gray, and in this they were followed by later generations. Strong localism and the desire for immediate and readily visible benefits, which were usable assets in the last century,have become barriers to progress in the present.

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1. Congress Report, 1906, p 63.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1-1 ROBERT OWEN'S SCHEME FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE POOR IN VILLAGES OF CO-OPERATION

Robert Owen's proposed "Villages of Co-operation" contrasted with existing Manufacturing Towns.

"In the Manufacturing Towns - the poor and working classes now usually live in garrets or cellars, within narrow lanes or confined courts.

In the Proposed Villages - the poor and working classes will live in dwellings formed into a large square, rendered in every way convenient and usefully ornamented.

In the Manufacturing Towns they are surrounded with dirt, enveloped in smoke, and have seldom a pleasant object on which to fix their eye.

In the Proposed Villages - they will be surrounded by gardens, have abundance of space in all directions to keep the air healthy and pleasant; they will have walks and plantations before them, within the square, and well cultivated grounds, keep in good order around, as far as the eye can reach.

In the Manufacturing Towns - parents are oppressed with anxiety to secure the means of subsistence for themselves and children.

In the Proposed Villages - in consequence of the principle of mutual co-operation being understood and practised to its full extent, the necessaries and comforts of life are enjoyed by all in abundance.

In the Manufacturing Towns - each family has the care and trouble of going to market to supply their individual wants, and under every disadvantage.

Source: The Times, Saturday, August 9th, 1817, p 3.

APPENDIX 1-1 ROBERT OWEN'S SCHEME FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE POOR IN VILLAGES OF CO-OPERATION

In the Proposed Villages - the same trouble will provide for 1,000 as is now required of one family; and all articles will be procured on the best terms.

In the Manufacturing Towns - each family must have domestic arrangements for cooking, etc. and one person must be wholly occupied in preparing the provisions, etc. for a family of ordinary numbers.

In the Proposed Villages - the best provisions will be cooked in the best manner, under arrangements that will enable five or six individuals to prepare provisions for 1,000.

In the Manufacturing Towns - the parents must toil from ten to sixteen hours a day to procure the wretched subsistence which they obtain for themselves and children and very often under circumstances the most unfavourable to health and natural enjoyments.

In the Proposed Villages - the parents will be pleasantly and healthfully occupied for not more than eight hours in the day.

In the Manufacturing Towns - in bad times, which frequently occur, the parties experience a distress not easily to be described.

In the Proposed Villages - in the event of sickness, the utmost care and attention will be experienced; every one, both from principle and interest, will be active and have pleasure in rendering the situation of the invalid as comfortable as possible.

Source: The Times, Saturday, August 9th, 1817, p 3.

APPENDIX 1-1 ROBERT OWEN'S SCHEME FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE POOR IN VILLAGES OF CO-OPERATION

In the Manufacturing Towns - the children are usually sickly and, as well as their parents, ill clothed.

In the Proposed Villages - the children will be ruddy and healthy and, as well as their parents, neat, clean and properly clothed.

In the Manufacturing Towns - the young children are much neglected and hourly acquire bad habits.

In the Proposed Villages - the children will be well looked after, prevented from acquiring bad, and taught good habits.

In the Manufacturing Towns - the education of the children is neglected.

In the Proposed Villages, the children are well trained and informed.

In the Manufacturing Towns - the children are sent early in life to some one trade or manufacture, usually of a very unhealthy nature, and at which they must attend for ten to sixteen hours a day.

In the Proposed Villages - the children will be gradually instructed in gardening, agriculture, and some trade or manufacture, and only employed according to age and strength.

In the Manufacturing Towns - the children are trained under ignorant persons, possessing many bad habits.

In the Proposed Villages - the children will be trained by intelligent persons, possessing only good habits.

Source: The Times, Saturday, August 9th, 1817, p 3.

APPENDIX 1-1 ROBERT OWEN'S SCHEME FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE POOR IN VILLAGES OF CO-OPERATION

In the Manufacturing Towns - scolding, coercion and punishments, are the usual instruments of training.

In the Proposed Villages - kindness and good sense will be the only instruments of training.

To proceed with the contrast would be endless; the mind of the reader will easily support the remainder, suffice it therefore to say

That the Manufacturing Towns are the abode of poverty, vice, crime and misery.

While the Proposed Villages will ever be the abode of abundance, active intelligence, correct conduct and happiness."

Source: The Times, Saturday, August 9th, 1817, p 3.

APPENDIX 5-1 MEMBERSHIP FIGURES OF YORKSHIRE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES FOR THE YEARS 1878-1900

YEAR	Total in County	Total number in the various Co-operative Union Districts						
		North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks
1878	103,082							
1879	122,189							
1880	120,944				District			
1881	129,496				Analysis			
1882	133,783				not available for these years			
1883	141,268							
1884	152,116	3,872	46,475	25,706	34,659	837	20,572	19,995
1885	164,812	5,576	49,077	26,458	36,470	5,586	20,799	20,846
1886	169,117	6,775	52,610	27,490	37,248	829	21,885	22,280
1887	175,921	7,385	53,884	28,455	39,402	643	23,569	22,583
1888	183,745	7,762	57,228	29,144	41,360	877	24,412	22,962
1889	191,701	7,821	60,696	30,276	43,160	1,166	24,660	23,922
1890	201,705	8,476	63,088	31,027	44,944	1,874	25,670	26,626
1891	213,188	8,548	67,541	32,006	45,823	2,531	26,288	30,451
1892	224,052	8,309	71,049	32,731	48,277	3,019	26,759	33,908
1893	232,549	8,557	74,642	33,184	49,467	3,842	26,982	35,875
1894	239,474	8,791	76,317	33,296	50,393	4,499	27,039	39,139
1895	249,916	9,341	79,779	34,065	52,004	4,971	27,656	42,100
1896	264,550	10,955	85,048	35,237	51,796	6,362	28,641	46,511
1897	282,838	12,681	92,157	36,454	53,559	7,498	29,538	50,951
1898	297,699	14,123	98,401	37,514	54,715	8,620	30,114	54,212
1899	310,607	15,586	102,436	38,195	56,230	10,721	31,067	56,372
1900	324,906	16,428	109,223	38,336	52,023	17,510	31,121	60,265

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901.

APPENDIX 5-2 MEMBERSHIP RECORD OF HUDDERSFIELD INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY FOR PERIOD 1889-1897

3,650 people joined the society between 1st June 1889 and 10th April 1897. The occupations listed below are the results of a sample taken - every fifth member appearing in membership lists.

Occupations of Sample (Total sample Population 730)

403 Ladies
34 Weavers
20 Men - No occupation listed
11 Labourers
10 Warehousemen
10 Teamers
9 Mechanics
8 each of following - Cloth Finishers, Clerks
7 each of following - Beamers, Dyers, Tailors, Woollen Spinners
6 each of following - Joiners, Cotton Warpers, Farmers, Designers
5 each of following - Engineers, Innkeepers, Travellers, Cotton Twiners
4 each of following - Wire Drawers, Fettlers
3 each of following - Gardeners, Shoemakers, Bakers, Perchers, Overlookers, Cotton Spinners, Engine Tenters Policemen, Coachmen, Insurance Agents
2 each of following - Lay Preachers, Strippers and Grinders, Marble Masons, Pattern Makers, Butchers, Warp Dressers, Plate-layers, Foremen, Newsagents, Gas Workers, Maltsters, Twisters, Blacksmiths, Smiths, Schoolmasters, Slaters, Cloth Dressers, Chemists, Surveyors, Firers, Firemen
1 each of following trades - Florist, Bath Manager, Finisher, Miner, Engine Cleaner, Loom Turner, Cartwright, Busher, Chapel-keeper, Collector, Card Machine

Source: Membership Register, Huddersfield Industrial Society

APPENDIX 5-2 MEMBERSHIP RECORD OF HUDDERSFIELD INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY FOR PERIOD 1889-1897

Tenter, Surryman, Teazer, Temperance Agents, Fish Salesman, Timber Merchant, Card Maker, Stoker, Silk Lomber, Fettler, Blanket Raiser, Wood Carver, Inspector, Gentleman, Dry Cleaner, Comb Jobber, Upholsterer, Rug Makers' Foreman, Woolcomb Maker, Manufacturer, Iron Turner, Cashier, Willower, Stocking Knitter, Brass Finisher, Brass Moulder, Turner, Jeweller, Healder, Cotton Winder, Book-keeper, Printer, Colour Maker, Painter, Clothing Cutter, Compositer, Cabinet Maker, Iron Moulder, Grocer's Assistant, Draper, Road Foreman, Mender, Grocer, Tram Driver, Scourer, Civil Engineer, Cloth Fuller, Priest, Plumber, Card Nailer, Cloth Presser, Ink Maker, Card Jobber, Wheelwright, Editor.

Source: Membership Register, Huddersfield Industrial Society

APPENDIX 5-3 NUMBER OF RETAIL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN THE COUNTY OF YORKSHIRE FOR THE YEARS 1878-1900

YEAR	Total in County	Number of Societies in the various Co-operative Union Districts						
		North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks
1878	189							
1879	186							
1880	188				District			
1881	184				Analysis			
1882	184				not available for these years			
1883	179							
1884	173	11	39	25	35	8	41	14
1885	175	10	42	25	35	8	41	14
1886	187	11	46	25	38	8	44	15
1887	186	11	46	25	38	8	45	13
1888	187	10	46	25	37	8	46	15
1889	185	10	44	26	37	8	45	15
1890	185	10	45	26	36	7	46	15
1891	184	10	45	26	35	7	46	15
1892	185	10	46	27	35	7	45	15
1893	189	11	48	27	35	8	45	15
1894	189	11	48	27	35	8	45	15
1895	191	10	48	28	35	9	46	15
1896	187	10	48	28	35	8	44	14
1897	192	11	50	29	35	9	44	14
1898	191	12	53	27	34	9	43	14
1899	191	12	49	27	34	12	43	14
1900	192	12	50	28	31	16	42	13

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901.

APPENDIX 5-4 TRADE OF YORKSHIRE RETAIL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES FOR THE YEARS 1878-1900

YEAR	Total in County	North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks
1878	3,128,159							
1879	3,667,368				District Analysis			
1880	3,374,004				not available			
1881	3,559,560				for these years			
1882	3,692,644							
1883	4,142,614							
1884	4,124,936	137,745	1,103,356	811,006	956,629	23,452	592,457	500,291
1885	4,011,531	140,138	1,109,131	807,001	852,072	49,371	581,007	472,811
1886	4,287,870	161,806	1,175,833	847,518	962,651	16,826	622,064	501,172
1887	4,591,210	173,542	1,259,217	887,229	1,025,358	15,892	690,544	539,428
1888	4,909,808	187,594	1,393,900	912,979	1,094,260	16,662	740,093	564,320
1889	5,287,235	208,463	1,554,707	944,696	1,165,576	22,529	756,139	635,125
1890	5,595,585	231,338	1,639,494	968,092	1,212,594	31,988	772,184	739,895
1891	6,157,889	235,969	1,827,018	1,029,527	1,289,350	45,320	814,402	916,303
1892	6,389,859	194,014	1,929,667	1,048,775	1,329,527	60,107	812,054	1,015,715
1893	6,239,618	186,872	1,916,651	1,016,511	1,273,821	66,658	798,601	980,504
1894	6,062,816	207,076	1,814,189	971,490	1,229,278	76,630	726,007	1,002,146
1895	6,379,385	218,596	1,937,283	1,015,905	1,268,325	93,628	791,803	1,053,845
1896	6,983,040	254,242	2,121,790	1,080,651	1,360,293	122,729	842,841	1,200,494
1897	7,639,016	308,484	2,378,674	1,148,528	1,423,954	146,320	888,385	1,344,671
1898	8,086,549	346,308	2,574,866	1,186,726	1,448,006	172,328	915,540	1,442,775
1899	8,487,763	367,855	2,702,037	1,204,203	1,492,601	205,685	955,477	1,559,905
1900	9,190,781	406,739	2,995,443	1,245,277	1,459,041	383,971	980,908	1,719,402

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901.

APPENDIX 5-5 SHARE CAPITAL HOLDINGS OF YORKSHIRE RETAIL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES FOR THE YEARS 1878-1900

YEAR	Total Share Capital for County	North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks
1878	1,203,931							
1879	1,498,521			Sectional Breakdown				
1880	1,397,145			not available for				
1881	1,524,592			these years				
1882	1,375,800							
1883	1,671,917							
1884	1,767,457	21,041	476,883	417,736	434,848	3,164	222,072	191,713
1885	1,881,203	23,390	515,599	408,295	477,381	12,365	235,869	208,304
1886	1,999,559	29,596	545,525	453,233	508,694	2,876	254,221	204,314
1887	2,087,894	33,984	565,232	440,716	535,076	2,078	275,802	235,006
1888	2,098,549	36,604	497,485	470,795	559,617	2,221	288,956	242,871
1889	2,301,287	37,719	626,963	482,431	586,800	2,885	294,885	269,604
1890	2,458,790	45,643	689,866	498,954	615,222	3,647	305,466	299,992
1891	2,601,572	47,153	745,653	504,878	629,346	8,763	310,055	355,724
1892	2,715,767	39,698	789,584	517,979	634,881	8,272	316,442	408,911
1893	2,812,818	43,690	824,867	519,762	659,958	10,554	319,665	434,322
1894	2,798,362	46,964	742,879	528,253	688,844	12,061	329,605	449,756
1895	3,154,595	53,226	934,941	554,501	744,955	17,363	346,946	502,623
1896	3,449,147	66,319	1,045,530	576,772	797,703	24,772	366,926	571,225
1897	3,739,515	82,471	1,157,811	601,891	851,781	33,447	386,527	625,587
1898	3,981,058	96,031	1,258,777	623,039	872,610	46,175	398,748	685,678
1899	4,270,371	113,320	1,352,716	641,486	916,428	59,698	423,583	763,140
1900	4,562,232		1,503,524	659,331	920,182	98,963	418,696	836,051

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901.

APPENDIX 5-6 NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES OF YORKSHIRE RETAIL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES FOR PERIOD 1895-1900

(Employees divided into DISTRIBUTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE classifications)

YEAR		North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks	County Totals	Sales per Employee
	Distributive	175	1,376	615	735	117	443	534	3,995	
1895	Productive	35	669	369	209	3	177	64	1,526	£1,155 pa
	Total	210	2,045	984	944	120	620	598	5,521	
	Distributive	224	1,523	659	780	146	507	582	4,421	
1896	Productive	37	734	359	245	0	169	89	1,633	£1,153 pa
	Total	261	2,257	1,018	1,025	146	676	671	6,054	
	Distributive	246	1,689	659	781	153	194	1,086	4,808	
1897	Productive	43	856	433	253	0	204	307	2,096	£1,106 pa
	Total	289	2,545	1,092	1,034	153	398	1,393	6,904	
	Distributive	290	1,831	677	834	179	523	1,143	5,477	
1898	Productive	62	1,005	454	263	0	198	323	2,305	£1,039 pa
	Total	352	2,836	1,131	1,097	179	721	1,466	7,782	
	Distributive	346	1,992	686	883	220	550	1,254	5,931	
1899	Productive	74	1,089	472	319	41	257	364	2,616	£ 993 pa
	Total	420	3,081	1,158	1,202	261	807	1,618	8,547	
	Distributive	369	2,135	718	874	317	545	1,274	6,232	
1900	Productive	93	1,252	433	334	60	240	381	2,793	£1,018 pa
	Total	462	3,387	1,151	1,208	377	785	1,655	9,025	

Source: Congress Reports, 1896-1901

APPENDIX 5-7 NET PROFITABILITY OF YORKSHIRE RETAIL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

(Figures in brackets are net profits expressed as a % of sales)

YEAR	Total Net Profit for Yorkshire Societies	North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks
1878	302,570 (9.67)							
1879	434,971 (11.86)							
1880	399,155 (11.83)							
1881	368,879 (10.36)	District Analysis						
1882	396,836 (10.74)	not available for these years						
1883	440,141 (10.62)							
1884	502,149 (12.17)	14,545 (10.56)	126,256 (11.44)	108,227 (13.34)	111,195 (11.62)	1,006 (4.29)	80,602 (13.6)	60,318 (12.06)
1885	524,320 (13.07)	15,348 (10.95)	132,117 (11.91)	117,823 (14.6)	120,270 (14.11)	1,225 (2.48)	80,532 (13.86)	57,005 (12.06)
1886	547,356 (12.76)	17,536 (10.83)	137,784 (11.71)	121,868 (14.38)	124,585 (23.94)	843 (5.01)	89,360 (14.36)	55,380 (11.05)
1887	604,863 (13.17)	18,299 (10.54)	156,601 (12.44)	132,416 (14.92)	135,889 (13.25)	798 (5.02)	101,419 (14.68)	59,441 (11.02)
1888	626,686 (12,76)	18,040 (9.62)	161,761 (11.60)	135,343 (14.82)	142,739 (13.04)	749 (4.49)	105,662 (14.27)	62,392 (11.06)

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901

APPENDIX 5-7 NET PROFITABILITY OF YORKSHIRE RETAIL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

(Figures in brackets are net profits expressed as a % of sales)

YEAR	Total Net Profit for Yorkshire Societies	North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks
1889	693,114 (13.11)	21,018 (10.08)	200,732 (12.91)	140,340 (14.85)	156,148 (13.40)	1,272 (5.64)	108,420 (14.34)	65,181 (10.26)
1890	757,321 (13.53)	23,752 (10.27)	215,336 (15.36)	148,683 (15.35)	170,885 (14.09)	2,193 (6.85)	113,414 (14.68)	83,058 (11.22)
1891	834,230 (13.54)	23,476 (9.95)	237,420 (12.99)	156,642 (15.21)	186,908 (14.49)	4,038 (8.91)	118,971 (14.61)	106,775 (11.65)
1892	857,026 (4.1)	18,392 (9.48)	251,418 (13.03)	157,559 (15.02)	192,351 (14.47)	5,170 (8.60)	113,990 (14.04)	118,146 (11.63)
1893	826,722 (13.25)	20,114 (10.76)	254,289 (13.26)	149,643 (14.72)	182,722 (14.34)	5,714 (8.57)	106,798 (13.37)	107,442 (10.96)
1894	828,019 (13.66)	23,104 (11.16)	239,706 (13.21)	151,631 (15.61)	181,164 (14.74)	8,087 (10.55)	106,964 (14.04)	117,363 (11.71)
1895	903,705 (14.16)	25,903 (11.85)	260,453 (13.44)	161,497 (15.89)	199,599 (15.73)	10,416 (11.12)	119,905 (15.14)	132,932 (12.61)
1896	1,122,140 (16.07)	33,114 (13.02)	326,425 (15.38)	195,566 (18.09)	232,957 (17.2)	14,961 (12.19)	143,017 (16.97)	176,100 (14.67)
1897	1,223,714 (16.02)	39,990 (12.96)	371,148 (15.62)	203,148 (17.68)	254,268 (17.85)	17,272 (11.80)	149,893 (16.87)	187,725 (13.96)

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901

APPENDIX 5-7 NET PROFITABILITY OF YORKSHIRE RETAIL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

(Figures in brackets are net profits expressed as a % of sales)

YEAR	Total Net Profit for Yorkshire Societies	North Riding	Airedale	Calderdale	Dewsbury	East Yorks	Huddersfield	South Yorks
1898	1,303,733 (16.12)	45,914 (13.25)	418,967 (16.27)	214,020 (18.03)	236,377 (16.32)	21,544 (12.50)	158,171 (17.27)	208,740 (14.47)
1899	1,146,720 (13.51)	49,408 (13.43)	409,091 (15.14)	220,358 (18.29)	250,672 (16.79)	25,577 (12.43)	160,750 (16.82)	229,187 (14.69)
1900	1,483,036 (16.13)	52,320 (12.86)	475,119 (15.86)	223,248 (17.92)	251,021 (17.2)	56,677 (14.76)	160,369 (16.3)	264,282 (15.37)

Source: Congress Reports, 1879-1901

APPENDIX 6-1 MYTHOLMROYD CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY - MEMBERSHIP BY SOCIAL CLASS

10 I Capitalists, Manufacturers, Professional etc.

Ship Manufacturer 1; Annuitant 2; Worsted Manufacturer 2; Woollen Manufacturer 3; Fustian Manufacturer 1; Cotton Manufacturer 1.

60 II Small Shopkeepers, Lower Professional, Farmers etc.

Farmer 20; Housekeeper 10; Manager of Co-operative 1; Chemist and Druggist 1; Grocer 2; Baker 2; Confectioner 1; Newsagent 1; Printer 1; Blacksmith 1; Bank Clerk 1; Clerk 1; Draper 3; Innkeeper 5; Estate Agent 2; Assistant Overseer 1; Railway Clerk 2; Schoolteacher 1; Ale and Porter Brewer 1; Worsted Mill Bookkeeper 1; Flock and Blanket Dealer 1; Manager of Cotton Mill 1.

223 III Skilled Labour

Cooper 1; Boot and Shoe Maker 5; Oil Refiner 5; Tailor 1; Dressmaker 1; Milliner 1; Grease Refiner 1; Carter 6; Stone Dresser 1; Stone Mason 7; Stone Cutter 1; Carpenter 2; Joiner 2; Wood Cutter 1; Dry Waller 3; Commercial Traveller 1; Road Contractor 2; Contractor 1; Corn Miller 1; Iron Moulder 2; Iron Founder 1; Railway Plate Layer 1; Railway Locomotive Driver 1; Plumber and Glazier 1; Roller Coverer 1; Factory Stoker 2; Cord Wainer 4; Dyer 6; Weaver 8; Steam Tenter 4; Overlooker 4; Worsted Overlooker 2; Worsted Spinner 1; Worsted Weaver 19; Worsted Warper 1; Jobber at Worsted Mill 1; Cloth Miller 2; Cloth Finisher 3; Carpet Loom Turner 1; Carpet Weaver 7; Woollen Weaver 9; Woollen Hand Weaver 1; Woollen Spinner 3; Wool Comber 9; Power Weaver

Source: Share Ledger 1861-76, Census Returns 1871.

APPENDIX 6-1 MYTHOLMROYD CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY - MEMBERSHIP BY SOCIAL CLASS

Lastings 1; Fustian Cutter 1; Fustian Dyer 2; Throstle Overlooker 2; Cotton Hand Weaver 3; Cotton Spinner 9; Cotton Mule Spinner 3; Cotton Weaver 30; Cotton Power Weaver 12; Cotton Twister and Loomer 4; Cotton Factory Stoker 3; Cotton Dyer 3; Cotton Loom Overlooker 6; Cotton Cut Looker 1; Cotton Stiffener and Finisher 1; Calico Weaver 3; Jobber at Cotton Mill 1; Heald Dresser 1.

53 IV Semi-Skilled Labour

Farm Servant 1; Domestic Servant 4; Agricultural Labourer 3; Seamstress 2; Quarryman 4; Gardener 1; Hawker 1; Warehouseman 7; Self Acting Minder 1; Winder 1; Worsted Winder 2; Worsted Reeler 1; Worsted Twister 1; Worsted Warehouseman 1; Wool Preparer 1; Woollen Stubber 1; Wool Warehouseman 1; Woollen Twister 1; Woollen Piece Binder 2; Fustian Maker-up 1; Fustian Ender and Mender 1; Cotton Warper 1; Cotton Carder 3; Cotton Winder 6; Cotton Piecer 1; Cotton Mule Piecer 1; Cotton Reeler 2; Cotton Scrutcher 1.

31 V Unskilled Labour

Masons Labourer 3; Cotton Heaver 1; Watchman 1; Railway Porter 2; Labourer 6; Factory Operative 2; Worsted Mill Operative 1; Wool Sorter 7; Woollen Mill Labourer 2; Long Wool Sorter 1; Cotton Card Room Hand 1; Waste Picker 1; Cotton Mill Labourer 3.

11 Residual Pensioner 1; Retired 3; Housewives 7.

Source: Share Ledger 1861-76, Census Returns 1871.

APPENDIX 6-2 MYTHOLMROYD CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP - PURCHASES BY SOCIAL CLASS

		PROFESSIONAL	NON-MANUAL LOWER PROFESSIONAL	SKILLED	SEMI-SKILLED	UNSKILLED	NOT KNOWN	ROW TOTAL
Under £5	Count	18	110	293	98	26	89	634
	Row %	2.8	17.4	46.2	15.5	4.1	14.0	35.8
	Col %	40.0	34.8	40.9	32.1	18.1	36.5	
	Total %	1.0	6.2	16.5	5.5	1.5	5.0	
£5.01 to £10	Count	16	76	150	40	50	69	401
	Row %	4.0	19.0	37.4	10.0	12.5	17.2	22.6
	Col %	35.6	24.1	20.9	13.1	34.7	28.3	
	Total %	0.9	4.3	8.5	2.3	2.8	3.9	
£10.01 to £15	Count	6	46	105	52	46	39	294
	Row %	2.0	15.6	35.7	17.7	15.6	13.3	16.1
	Col %	13.3	14.6	14.6	17.0	31.9	16.0	
	Total %	0.3	2.6	5.9	2.9	2.6	2.2	
£15.01 to £20	Count	5	15	61	47	18	22	168
	Row %	3.0	8.9	36.3	28.0	10.7	13.1	9.5
	Col %	11.1	4.7	8.5	15.4	12.5	9.0	
	Total %	0.3	0.8	3.4	2.7	1.0	1.2	
£20.01 to £25	Count	0	16	38	26	2	19	101
	Row %	0.0	15.8	37.6	25.7	2.0	18.8	5.7
	Col %	0.0	5.1	5.3	8.5	1.4	7.8	
	Total %	0.0	0.9	2.1	1.5	0.1	1.1	
£25.01 to £30	Count	0	14	21	16	1	4	56
	Row %	0.0	25.0	37.5	28.6	1.8	7.4	8.2
	Col %	0.0	4.4	2.9	5.2	0.7	1.6	
	Total %	0.0	0.8	1.2	0.9	0.1	0.2	

Source: Share Ledger 1861-76, Census Returns 1871.

APPENDIX 6-2 MYTHOLMROYD CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP - PURCHASES BY SOCIAL CLASS

		PROFESSIONAL	NON-MANUAL LOWER PROFESSIONAL	SKILLED	SEMI-SKILLED	UNSKILLED	NOT KNOWN	ROW TOTAL
£30.01 to £35	Count	0	11	17	15	1	2	46
	Row %	0.0	23.9	37.0	32.6	2.2	4.3	2.6
	Col %	0.0	3.5	2.4	4.9	0.7	0.8	
	Total %	0.0	0.6	1.0	0.8	0.1	0.1	
£35.01 to £40	Count	0	10	9	6	0	0	25
	Row %	0.0	40.0	36.0	24.0	0.0	0.0	1.4
	Col %	0.0	3.2	1.3	2.0	0.0	0.0	
	Total %	0.0	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.0	
£40.01 to £45	Count	0	4	7	5	0	0	16
	Row %	0.0	25.0	43.8	31.3	0.0	0.0	0.9
	Col %	0.0	1.3	1.0	1.6	0.0	0.0	
	Total %	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.0	
£45.01 to £50	Count	0	6	8	0	0	0	14
	Row %	0.0	42.9	51.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Col %	0.0	1.9	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	
	Total %	0.0	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Over £50	Count	0	8	8	0	0	0	16
	Row %	0.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9
	Col %	0.0	2.5	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	
	Total %	0.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.o	
Column Total		45	316	717	305	144	244	1,771
		2.5	17.8	40.5	17.2	8.1	13.8	100.0

Source: Share Ledger 1861-76, Census Returns 1871.

APPENDIX 6-3 MYTHOLMROYD CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP - SHARE HOLDINGS BY SOCIAL CLASS

		PROFESSIONAL	NON-MANUAL LOWER PROFESSIONAL	SKILLED	SEMI-SKILLED	UNSKILLED	NOT KNOWN	ROW TOTAL
Less than £1	Count	0	15	29	42	9	20	115
	Row %	0.0	13.0	25.2	36.5	7.8	17.4	6.5
	Col %	0.0	4.7	4.0	13.8	6.3	8.2	
	Total %	0.0	0.8	1.6	2.4	0.5	1.1	
£1	Count	8	104	257	93	49	91	602
	Row %	1.3	17.3	42.7	15.4	8.1	15.1	34.0
	Col %	17.8	32.9	35.8	30.5	34.0	37.3	
	Total %	0.5	5.9	14.5	5.3	2.8	5.1	
£1.01 to £5	Count	25	105	182	57	11	82	462
	Row %	5.4	22.7	39.4	12.3	2.4	17.7	26.1
	Col %	55.6	33.2	25.4	18.7	7.6	33.6	
	Total %	1.4	5.9	10.3	3.2	0.6	4.6	
£5.01 to £10	Count	2	20	62	24	11	8	127
	Row %	1.6	15.7	48.8	18.9	8.7	6.3	7.2
	Col %	4.4	6.3	8.6	7.9	7.6	3.3	
	Total %	0.1	1.1	3.5	1.4	0.6	0.5	
£10.01 to £15	Count	2	18	49	30	2	4	105
	Row %	1.9	17.1	46.7	28.6	1.9	3.8	5.9
	Col %	4.4	5.7	6.8	9.8	1.4	1.6	
	Total %	0.1	1.0	2.8	1.7	0.1	0.2	
£15.01 to £20	Count	0	5	45	5	4	2	61
	Row %	0.0	8.2	73.8	8.2	6.6	3.3	3.4
	Col %	0.0	1.6	6.3	1.6	2.8	0.8	
	Total %	0.0	0.3	2.5	0.3	0.2	0.1	

Source: Share Ledger, 1871-76, Census Returns 1871

APPENDIX 6-3 MYTHOLMROYD CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP - SHARE HOLDINGS BY SOCIAL CLASS

		PROFESSIONAL	NON-MANUAL LOWER PROFESSIONAL	SKILLED	SEMI-SKILLED	UNSKILLED	NOT KNOWN	ROW TOTAL
£20.01 to £25	Count	3	3	15	9	1	21	52
	Row %	5.8	5.8	28.8	17.3	1.9	40.4	2.9
	Col %	6.7	0.9	2.1	3.0	0.7	8.6	
	Total %	0.2	0.2	0.8	0.5	0.1	1.2	
£25.01 to £30	Count	3	4	15	4	15	1	42
	Row %	7.1	9.5	35.7	9.5	35.7	2.4	2.4
	Col %	6.7	1.3	2.1	1.3	10.4	0.5	
	Total %	0.2	0.2	0.8	0.2	0.8	0.1	
£30.01 to £35	Count	0	2	6	3	5	0	16
	Row %	0.0	12.5	37.5	18.8	31.3	0.0	0.9
	Col %	0.0	0.6	0.8	1.0	3.5	0.0	
	Total %	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.0	
£35.01 to £40	Count	1	0	7	4	4	2	18
	Row %	5.6	0.0	38.9	22.2	22.2	11.1	1.0
	Col %	2.2	0.0	1.0	1.3	2.8	0.8	
	Total %	0.1	0.0	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.1	
£40.01 to £45	Count	1	2	6	8	10	11	38
	Row %	2.6	5.3	15.8	21.1	26.3	28.9	2.1
	Col %	2.2	0.6	0.8	2.6	6.9	4.5	
	Total %	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.6	0.6	
£45.01 to £50	Count	0	6	4	6	4	2	22
	Row %	0.0	27.3	18.2	27.3	18.2	9.1	1.2
	Col %	0.0	1.9	0.6	2.0	2.8	0.8	
	Total %	0.0	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.1	

Source: Share Ledger 1871-76, Census Returns 1871.

APPENDIX 6-3 MYTHOLMROYD CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP - SHARE HOLDINGS BY SOCIAL CLASS

		PROFESSIONAL	NON-MANUAL LOWER PROFESSIONAL	SKILLED	SEMI-SKILLED	UNSKILLED	NOT KNOWN	ROW TOTAL
Over £50	Count	0	32	40	20	19	0	111
	Row %	0.0	28.8	36.0	18.0	17.1	0.0	6.3
	Col %	0.0	10.1	5.6	6.6	13.2	0.0	
	Total %	0.0	1.8	2.3	1.1	1.1	0.0	
Column Total		45	316	717	305	144	244	1,771
		2.5	17.8	40.5	17.2	8.1	13.8	100.0

Source: Share Ledger 1871-76, Census Returns 1871

APPENDIX 6-4 MYTHOLMROYD CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP - CROSS TABULATION OF SHARES BY PURCHASES

		Under £5	£5.01 to £10	£10.01 to £15	£15.01 to £20	£20.01 to £25
Shares Less than £1	Count	59	33	12	6	4
	Row %	51.3	28.7	10.4	5.2	3.5
	Col %	9.3	8.2	4.1	3.6	4.0
	Total %	3.3	1.9	0.7	0.3	0.2
£1	Count	89	147	144	80	55
	Row %	14.8	24.4	23.9	13.3	9.1
	Col %	14.0	36.7	49.0	47.6	54.5
	Total %	5.0	8.3	8.1	4.5	3.1
£1.01 to £5	Count	282	94	39	19	8
	Row %	61.0	20.3	8.4	4.1	1.7
	Col %	44.5	23.4	13.3	11.3	7.9
	Total %	15.9	5.3	2.2	1.1	0.5
£5.01 to £10	Count	64	21	14	9	12
	Row %	50.4	16.5	11.0	7.1	9.4
	Col %	10.1	5.2	4.8	5.4	11.9
	Total %	3.6	1.2	0.8	0.5	0.7
£10.01 to £15	Count	47	32	7	10	2
	Row %	44.8	30.5	6.7	9.5	1.9
	Col %	7.4	8.0	2.4	6.0	2.0
	Total %	2.7	1.8	0.4	0.6	0.1
£15.01 to £20	Count	29	15	9	3	1
	Row %	45.5	24.6	14.8	4.9	1.6
	Col %	4.6	3.7	3.1	1.8	1.0
	Total %	1.6	0.8	0.5	0.2	0.1
£20.01 to £25	Count	22	6	7	6	2
	Row %	42.3	11.5	13.5	11.5	3.8
	Col %	3.5	1.5	2.4	3.6	2.0
	Total %	1.2	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.1
£25.01 to £30	Count	16	4	10	8	1
	Row %	38.1	9.5	23.8	19.0	2.4
	Col %	2.5	1.0	3.4	4.8	1.0
	Total %	0.9	0.2	0.6	0.5	0.1
£30.01 to £35	Count	1	8	2	1	2
	Row %	6.3	50.0	12.5	6.3	12.5
	Col %	0.2	2.0	0.7	0.6	2.0
	Total %	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.1

Source: Share Ledger 1861-76, Census Returns, 1871.

APPENDIX 6-4 MYTHOLMROYD CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP - CROSS TABULATION OF SHARES BY PURCHASES

£25.01 to £30	£30.01 to £35	£35.01 to £40	£40.01 to £45	£45.01 to £50	Over £50	Row Total
0	1	0	0	0	0	115
0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.5
0.0	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
32	22	16	7	3	7	602
5.3	3.7	2.7	1.2	0.5	1.2	34.0
57.1	47.8	64.0	43.8	21.4	43.8	
1.8	1.2	0.9	0.4	0.2	0.4	
7	6	3	2	1	1	462
1.5	1.3	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.2	26.1
12.5	13.0	12.0	12.5	7.1	6.3	
0.4	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	
2	2	1	1	1	0	127
1.6	1.6	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.0	7.2
3.6	4.3	4.0	6.3	7.1	0.0	
0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	
2	1	1	0	1	2	105
1.9	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	1.9	5.9
3.6	2.2	4.0	0.0	7.1	12.5	
0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	
1	1	0	1	1	0	61
1.6	1.6	0.0	1.6	1.6	0.0	3.4
1.8	2.2	0.0	6.3	7.1	0.0	
0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	
3	4	o	1	1	0	52
5.8	7.7	0.0	1.9	1.9	0.0	2.9
5.4	8.7	0.0	6.3	7.1	0.0	
0.2	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	
1	1	0	0	1	0	42
2.4	2.4	0.0	0.0	2.4	0.0	2.4
1.8	2.2	0.0	0.0	7.1	0.0	
0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	
1	1	0	0	0	0	16
6.3	6.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9
1.8	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	

Source: Share Ledger 1861-76, Census Returns 1871.

APPENDIX 6-4 MYTHOLMROYD CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP - CROSS TABULATION OF SHARES BY PURCHASES

		Under £5	£5.01 to £10	£10.01 to £15	£15.01 to £20	£20.01 to £25
£35.01 to £40	Count	2	7	5	2	1
	Row %	11.1	38.9	27.8	11.1	5.6
	Col %	0.3	1.7	1.7	1.2	1.0
	Total %	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.1
£40.01 to £45	Count	13	8	12	2	1
	Row %	34.2	21.1	31.6	5.3	2.6
	Col %	2.1	2.0	4.1	1.2	1.0
	Total %	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.1	0.1
£45.01 to £50	Count	3	4	4	1	5
	Row %	13.6	18.2	18.2	4.5	22.7
	Col %	0.5	1.0	1.4	0.6	5.0
	Total %	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.3
Over £50	Count	7	22	29	21	7
	Row %	6.3	19.8	26.1	18.9	6.3
	Col %	1.1	5.5	9.9	12.5	6.9
	Total %	0.4	1.2	1.6	1.2	0.4
Column Total		634	401	294	168	101
		35.8	22.6	16.6	9.5	5.7

Source: Share Ledger 1861-76, Census Returns 1871.

APPENDIX 6-4 MYTHOLMROYD CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP - CROSS TABULATION OF SHARES BY PURCHASES

£25.01 to £30	£30.01 to £35	£35.01 to £40	£40.01 to £45	£45.01 to £50	Over £50	Row Total
0	1	0	0	0	0	18
0.0	5.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
0.0	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
1	1	0	0	0	0	38
2.6	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.1
1.8	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
1	3	0	0	0	1	22
4.6	13.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	1.2
1.8	6.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.3	
0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	
5	2	4	4	5	5	111
4.5	1.8	3.6	3.6	4.5	4.5	6.3
8.9	4.3	16.0	25.0	35.7	31.3	
0.3	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	
56	46	25	16	14	16	1,771
3.2	2.6	1.4	1.9	0.8	0.9	100.0

Source: Share Ledger 1861-76, Census Returns 1871.

APPENDIX 7-1 PRESIDENTS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS - HARROGATE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

Mr. Chas. Dawson, President 1887-1897

Urged Society the necessity of joining the C.W.S., and this course was adopted, and orders down for private traders were immediately transferred to the C.W.S. Private traders were up in arms, and Mr. Dawson, who was then in a business as a builder and contractor, suffered severely from a business and financial point of view. He was a prominent temperance advocate, and an active worker in the Good Templars crusade. Other branches of temperance work had his cordial support; the Rechabites, Band of Hope Union, and the Temperance Band were all objects of interest to him. He also held many offices in the Wesleyan Church, being for 23 years a superintendent of the Bar Wesleyan Sunday School.

Mr. A.W. Leeming, President 1897-1900 and 1901-1902

Brought up to the Cabinet-making business, but relinquished this for an outdoor occupation and became a postman in 1882, holding the position at present time (1908) of Inspector of Telegraph Messengers. Mr. Leeming has been ever assiduous in promoting movements of thrift. He is a member of the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows and is a trustee of the local lodge. His sympathies have always been with Trade Unionism, the confidence of his colleagues at the Post Office being shown by sending him as a delegate to the Nottingham Conference of Postmen's Federation.

Mr. George Duffield, Director 1889-1901

Bulwark of Trades Unionism, he is a railway signalman - he takes a keen and active part in the welfare and government of the local branch of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, holding the office of Chairman at the present time. Represents them on trades Council.

Source: History of Harrogate Society - Twenty one years of Progress 1887 -1908 (Harrogate, 1908).

APPENDIX 7-1 PRESIDENTS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS - HARROGATE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

Mr. F.I'Anson, Secretary and General Manager

Office boy at the Windhill Co-operative Society rising to Assistant Secretary of Windhill Society. Travelled in private trade to London, Brighton, Aldershot. 1889 appointed Secretary of Ravensthorpe Self-help Co-operative Society (now amalgamated with Dewsbury society). Came to Harrogate 1900. Member of the "Morning Star" Lodge of the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows, Shipley District. Active in cause of Non-conformity, Secretary, Bilton Grange Congregational Church.

Mr. George Shepherd, The Oldest Director of the Present Board

Experienced practical builder. Supporter of Co-operative Production.

Mr. John Douglas Thompson, Director 1890-1901

Apprenticed to joinering trade, later in life opened premises for sale of antique furniture.

Mr. Frank Wheelhouse, Vice-President of the Society

At 15 years of age apprenticed as a joiner to the North-Eastern Railway Company. Joined Knaresbro'Court of Foresters when he was in his 19th year, and in July 1888 was elected Chief Ranger. He is a member of the Church of England, a member of the Band of Hope, and afterwards as Sunday School teacher and secretary of the Young Men's Social Club.

Scurce: History of Harrogate Society - Twenty one years of Progress 1887-1908, (Harrogate, 1908).

APPENDIX 7-1 PRESIDENTS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS - HARROGATE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

Mr. Henry Hill J.P., President of the Society 1900-1901

Ended school at nine years of age - worked on farm till he was twenty, when he joined the railway service. He is a firm believer of the manifold benefits of such glorious movements as Trade Unionism, Co-operation and Labour Representation, and in encouraging all that is to the true interests of those who are desirous of improving their condition and protecting the interests of all classes of workers, and uplifting them to a higher plane. His position as the President of Harrogate and District Trades Council which office he has held since its formation, is proof of this. He is at the present time probably most before the public eye as being the first working man to be appointed as a Justice of the Peace for the Borough of Harrogate. The Railway Servants' Orphan Fund is one of the things near his heart.

Mr. H.G. Bennett, President of the Society 1903-1906

Messenger boy Harrogate Post Office 1885 rising to keen interest in social questions - self help efforts especially. He became a member of the Total Abstinence Sons of Phoenix Lodge. His father was one of the early pioneers of the society, Secretary and Editor of the "Record". He is a socialist, a member of the Fabian Society and vice-President of the Harrogate and District Trades Council. He is a zealous supporter of the Postmen's Federation.

Mr. C.H. Day, President of the Society 1908

Career in news agency and stationery business, later employed with the Harrogate Gas Company. In 1893 joined his father in the estate of house agency business. Mr. Day is an earnest Rechabite, taking varying offices from doorkeeper to the District Chief Ruler and Chairman of the

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APPENDIX 7-1 PRESIDENTS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS - HARROGATE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

Leeds District. Strong believer in Co-operative productions. In the religious movement he has taken his share of work not only as a teacher, but also as treasurer of the Band of Hope. He is on the PSA Committee, and a superintendent of the Sunday School at the Congregational Church.

Councillor J. Shepherd, Member of Committee 1887-1897

Commenced in business as a slater. Councillor in the East Ward. One of the trustees of the Primitive Methodist Church and a Sunday School Superintendent. Active in the Primitive Methodist Orphan Homes.

Mr. Abraham Bennett, Member of Committee 1887-1888

Elected to first Committee - railway policeman. Clique of private traders try to get him to sever his connections with the society, they even lodged complaint with NER. He remembers well when all the millers of the district were warned by an amalgamation of private traders that in the event of them supplying the stores the private traders would cease to place orders with them.

Mr. Sam Forrest, One of the Committee

Brilliant elocutionist. As a member of the Independent Labour Party, he at times voices his opinions at their meetings on the question of the day, and is an advocate for the labour movement attaching themselves to co-operation as being the only method that the worker can ever hope to gain by substantial change. Active in Postmen's Federation.

Source: History of Harrogate Society - Twenty one years of Progress 1887-1908 (Harrogate, 1908).

APPENDIX 7-1 PRESIDENTS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS - HARROGATE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

Mr. Robert Atkinson, Director 1887-1897 and a Former Treasurer - Private Businessman

The question of building houses for the people was one which received his earnest support, and he rendered material assistance in the Society's building operations by his practical knowledge as a builder.

Mr. S. Pickersgill, Director and the First Vice-President of Society

Porter North-Eastern Railway Company, ticket collector Harrogate. Staunch Trade Unionist - member of Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. Deep religious convictions, takes part in the work at St. Mark's Church, Leeds Road, where he holds the position of sides-man. When at Holbeck he was elected as a local committee-man of the Leeds Co-operative Society at the Armley Road Branch Store.

The Late Mr. Wm. Robinson, died whilst serving as a Director

Apprenticed as a joiner at the age of 14. He was convinced of the great advantages to be derived from Trades Unions, Friendly Societies, and other forms of combination familiar to the working classes of this country. Member of Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners. When he died the special funeral service in Oddfellowship was read by Bro. F. Inman PPGM, this being the first time for thirty years that this ceremony had taken place in Knaresbro'.

Source: History of Harrogate Society - Twenty one years of Progress 1887-1908 (Harrogate, 1908).

APPENDIX 7-1 PRESIDENTS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS - HARROGATE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

Mr. C. Dawson	Builder
Mr. D.R. Goodyear	Chief Clerk, GPO
Mr. J. Shepherd	Slater
Mr. G. Baines	Registrar
Mr. F.G. Hanson	Joiner
Mr. A. Austin	Telegraph Linesman
Mr. T. Goodyear	Retired Policeman
Mr. A. Bennett	NER Policeman
Mr. R.W. Sadler	Booking Clerk
Mr. S. Forrest	Postman
Mr. W. Gott	Gardener
Mr. A. Rhodes	NER Goods Foreman
Mr. G. Best	Builder
Mr. R. Atkinson	Builder
Mr. G. Oddy	Joiner
Mr. G. Haigh	Joiner
Mr. C. Hartley	Baths Manager
Mr. Wm. Walter	NER Carriage Inspector
Mr. T. Hudson	Platelayer
Mr. G. Todd	Baths Chairman
Mr. O. Yeadon	Shoemaker
Mr. J.W. Mawson	Decorator
Mr. F. King	Joiner
Mr. G. Duffield	Signalman
Mr. J.D. Thompson	Joiner
Mr. M. Elsworth	Baths Chairman
Mr. J.F. Shutt	Cabinet Maker
Mr. A.W. Leeming	Postman
Mr. G. Shepherd	Slater
Mr. W.H. Johnson	NER Goods Foreman

Source: History of Harrogate Society - Twenty one years of Progress 1887-1908 (Harrogate, 1908).

APPENDIX 7-1 PRESIDENTS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS - HARROGATE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

Mr. S. Pickersgill	Ticket Collector
Mr. J. Johnson	Coachman
Mr. J. Polworth	Insurance Agent
Mr. T. Fenwick	Engine Driver
Mr. A. Palmer	Insurance Agent
Mr. H. Hill	Signalman
Mr. I. Smith	Coachman
Mr. H. Dawson	Builder
Mr. H.G. Bennett	Postman
Mr. W. Grant	Signalman
Mr. W. Robinson	Joiner
Mr. F. Wheelhouse	Joiner
Mr. J. Shutt	Joiner
Mr. J.R. Usher	Estate Agent
Mr. C.H. Day	Estate Agent
Mr. T. Coy	Engine Driver
Mr. J.H. Smith	Postman
Mr. J. Wilkinson	Goods Guard
Mr. G. Hill	Signalman
Mr. J.E. Preston	Clerk
Mr. H. West	Plate Layer
Mr. E. Fisher	Printer's Overseer
Mr. T. White	Water Inspector
Mr. R. Dawson	Cabinet Maker
Mr. J. Lee	Bookbinder
Mr. J.W. Fleet	Gardener
Mr. J.W. Mason	Power Loom Turner
Mr. W.S. Newton	Joiner

Source: History of Harrogate Society - Twenty one years of Progress 1887-1908 (Harrogate, 1908).

APPENDIX 8-1 MEMBERSHIP OF 1869 CO-OPERATIVE CONGRESS ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

Mr. T. Hughes MP, having consented to become the Chairman of the Committee supported by Mr. Anthony J. Mundella MP, as Vice-President, Mr. Walter Morrison MP, and Mr. E.O. Greening as Treasurers, and Mr. W. Pare as Honorary Secretary, the Committee ultimately comprised the following gentlemen, exclusively of the office-bearers, above-named:

Right Hon. W. Cowper MP
R.M. Carter Esq. MP
W. Allan (Secretary of Amalgamated Engineers)
R. Applegarth (Secretary of Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners)
M. Arles-Dufour (Lyons)
W.E.A. Axon FRSL (Manchester)
Joseph Baker
Thomas Beggs
M. Louis Blanc
James Borrowman (Glasgow)
Sir John Bowring (Claremont Exeter)
Charles Bray (Coventry)
Dr. L. Brentano (Aschaffenburg)
H.C. Briggs (Whitwood Colleries)
F.J. Burgess (Secretary of Associated Carpenters and Joiners)
W. Romaine Callender (Manchester)
Professor C.C. Cabella (Genoa)
Alexander Campbell (Glasgow)
John Carter
Rev. W.H. Channing
James Cherry
Colonel H. Clinton (Royston)
E.T. Craig (Oxford)

Source: Proceedings of London Congress, 1869

APPENDIX 8-1 MEMBERSHIP OF 1869 CO-OPERATIVE CONGRESS ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

J.G. Crawford

Hugh Doherty (Paris)

Glu. Dolfi (Grand Master of Artize Fraternity, Florence)

Passmore Edwards

W.S.W. Faber (Editor of Arbeideren, Copenhagen)

John C. Farn (Patricroft)

E. Feuiller (Algeria)

J.C. Fox (Manchester)

J. Frearson (Birmingham)

Rev. J.H. Gandy (Rectory, Warwick)

Abraham Greenwood (Present of North of England Wholesale Society)

Daniel Guile (Secretary Amalgamated Society of Ironfounders)

Edward Owen Greening (Managing Director of Agricultural and Horticulutural Association)

Rev. S. Hansard (Bethnal Green)

Thomas Hare

James Haughton, JP (Dublin)

Hon. Auberon Herbert

Dr. Max Hirsch (Member of North German Parliament, Berlin)

James Hole

John Holmes (Leeds)

George Jacob Holyoake

William Howitt (Esher, Surrey)

Professor Huber (Wernigerode)

Dr. F. Hunter (Maryhill, Glasgow)

John Ireland (Manager of Metropolitan and Home Counties Purchasing Association)

Professor W.S. Jevons (Owens College, Manchester)

Lloyd Jones

Rev. Charles Kingsley (Cambridge University)

Source: Proceedings of London Congress, 1869.

APPENDIX 8-1 MEMBERSHIP OF 1869 CO-OPERATIVE CONGRESS ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

Axel Krook (President of Working Men's Association, Gothenburg)
J.B. Langley
Hon. and Rev. J.W. Leigh (Stoneleigh, Warwick)
F. Lessnner (Solingen)
J.M. Ludlow
Mrs. E. Lynn Linton
Rev. A.F. Macdonald MA (Lincoln)
Malcolm Macleod (Manchester)
J.S. Manley
H. Marriott
Edward Meads (Manager of Co-operative Cabinetmakers' Society)
Josiah J. Merriman
George Merrylees (Barrhead)
John Stuart Mill
J.T. McInnes, Barrhead (Editor of Scottish Co-operator)
Rev. W.N. Molesworth
R.B.D. Morier CB (H.M. Charge d'Affaires, Darmstadt)
Edward Vansittart Neale
Walter Newall
William Newton
Robert Newton (Managing Director of Framemakers' and Gilders' Association)
William Nuttall (Manchester)
George Odger (Secretary of London Trades' Council)
John Pashley (Managing Director of Framemakers' and Guilders' Association)
Rev. C. Kegal Paul (Wimborne)
John Parker (Consett)
Mrs. Pennington (Broom Hall, Dorking)
Ion Perdicaris
Professor Edward Pfeiffer (Stuttgart)
Lawrence Pitkeithley (Huddersfield)

Source: Proceedings of London Congress, 1869.

APPENDIX 8-1 MEMBERSHIP OF 1869 CO-OPERATIVE CONGRESS ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

Henry Pitman, Manchester (Editor of Co-operator)
John Plummer (Hackney)
Hodgson Pratt (Hon.Sec. Working Men's Club and Institute Union)
John Ruskin MA
George Shepton
Robert Stephens
W.F. Cowell Stepney
George Storrs (Staleybridge)
Rev. Henry Solly
Pastor Sonne (Thisted, Denmark)
Rev. S.A. Steinthal (Manchester)
William Stubbs (Secretary of Amalgamated Society of Silk Twisters, Leek)
W. Swindlehurst (Secretary of Artizans' and Dwellings Company)
Dr. Henry Travis
Arthur Trevelyan JP (Tyncholme, East Lothian)
Dr. H. Valleroux (Paris)
Professor Francesco Vigano (Milan)
Dr. G. Vogt (Professor in the University of Berne)
R. Bailey Walker (Manchester)
Alfred A. Walton
Dr. J. Watts (Manchester)
Robert Wigg
Miss Alice Wilson (Manchester)
F. Wilson (Leamington)
Franz Wirth (Editor of the Arbeitgeber, Frankfurt)
Joseph Woodin

Source: Proceedings of London Congress, 1869.

APPENDIX 8-2 AN ADDRESS BY ARNOLD TOYNBEE ON THE EDUCATION OF CO-OPERATORS - Delivered at the Oxford Co-operative Congress held in 1882.

All co-operators follow their great founder in denouncing individualism and the principle of competition; but I have recently observed among some social reformers a certain impatience and distrust of that opposite principle of association to which co-operators have so long looked for the ultimate regeneration of our social system. Though we may not attach much importance to this feeling, we cannot deny its existence. We recognise it in sarcastic descriptions of the motley throng of societies which jostle each other in modern civilisation from societies for the salvation of souls and the spread of the gospel among the heathen, down to associations for the reform of bread, the promotion of early rising, and the burial of dead cats! It is hinted in these descriptions that most modern societies are trivial and ridiculous, or mere vexatious impediments to healthy individual action; and a comparison is sometimes instituted between them and the mediaeval guilds, much to their disadvantage. The criticism is not entirely undeserved, nor the contrast entirely false. Putting aside great commercial companies, which are avowedly associations of capital trading for profit, we must, I think, admit that a large number of modern organisations are simply aggregates of money, with trivial or transient objects, instead of being, like the mediaeval guilds, living groups of men animated by common principles of religious and industrial faith, and united for the satisfaction of the great permanent needs of human life.

I shall not here pause to consider the reason of this difference, but the comparison and the criticism will be of value if they lead us to ask what is the real function of the innumerable associations of the present age. A careful examination will prove that though not a few are useless and ridiculous, the majority of them are the legitimate

Source: Congress Proceedings, 1882, pp 59-61.

APPENDIX 8-2 AN ADDRESS BY ARNOLD TOYNBEE ON THE EDUCATION OF CO-OPERATORS - Delivered at the Oxford Co-operative Congress held in 1882.

products of the extraordinary variety of men's wants and aims, which, under the complex conditions of modern social life it is beyond the power of the individual to satisfy or achieve. The Animals Necropolis Company, to which I have alluded, seems at first sight to be properly included under those societies which are foolish and useless, but it is in reality a fair if quaint illustration of the truth of the assertion I have just made. The tenderness for animals as companions, the crowding together of dwellings in great cities without a foot of vacant space, the strictness of modern sanitary regulations, are facts which explain and justify the existence of a society so apparently repugnant to common sense. I must resist the temptation which here presents itself to trace the genesis of other forms of existing associations, and content myself with drawing your attention to one singular fact, that a considerable number of them are the direct creation of that State interference against which many co-operators entertain a generous prejudice. The blamed activity of modern legislation has strengthened, and not weakened, the sense of moral responsibility and habits of voluntary co-operation. For example, the laws which punish the adulteration of food called into existence societies of master bakers, and of venders of milk, to enforce the penalties against fraudulent tradesmen, and the laws which punish cruelty to animals gave birth to a society for the presentation of offenders, thus rendering possible the effective expression of a moral sentiment which would otherwise have fretted in impotence.

If now we turn from modern associations in general to the consideration of workmen's societies, we shall find that though their aims cannot be described as transient or trivial, yet they too are in character usually aggregates of money limited to a single object, and

Source: Congress Proceedings, 1882, pp 59-61

make no attempt to embrace the whole of human life. Building societies facilitate the purchase of dwellings. Friendly societies make provision for sickness and death. Trades unions have rather a wider scope, and seem more nearly to resemble mediaeval guilds in character and purpose. To the outward eye co-operative societies are smaller things than trade unions and of slighter significance. Their aims - the promotion of thrift and the reduction of the cost of living - appear narrow and uninteresting; their energies seem entirely absorbed in the purchase of chests of tea and sacks of flour, and the ordinary coarse necessaries of daily life. Nor are their members (I think) in such close contact as those of a trades union; the majority of them are often as unknown to each other as the shareholders in a great railway, and there are few opportunities of intercourse besides the quarterly meetings of the managing committee. A deep scrutiny, however, reveals that though not endowed with the fervent united life of the medieval guilds, co-operative societies, by the possession of large ideals, approach nearer to them in reality than do trades unions, which have a closer outward resemblance. I do not mean to disparage trades unions, nor to deny that they have moral aims because they have not large ideals; but I am inclined to think that the spirit which breathes in the fine inscription on the banner of the Glovers of Perth in the seventeenth century, "The perfect honour of a craft or beauty of a trade is not in wealth but in moral worth, whereby virtue gains renown," is more characteristic of co-operative societies than of any association formed in any particular modern trade. Trade unions which accept the facts of the present industrial system, and are engaged in a hand-to-hand fight with capitalists, have no time to indulge in dreams which are natural to bodies of men whose aim is the radical transformation of the entire conditions of industrial life. For we know

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that, however seemingly immersed in the petty business of the shop co-operators may be, their real aim and their real determination is to put an end to competition and the division of men into capitalists and labourers - an aim and determination which again reminds us of the mediaeval guilds, where labour and capital were associated, and competition held in abhorrence. It is this large spirit, this resolute refusal to accept the present state of society as final, which marks off co-operation from all other Movements, and gives to it an interest which is unique. I know it is said that "The one loud and universal shout of social regeneration", raised by Robert Owen, has not only to the discerning ear, but in reality sunk into a mere debate about dividends; but this we will not allow to be true. The ideal of Robert Owen had to run the course of other ideals; it had to die that it might live. "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die;" the co-operative ideal had to be cast into the soil of material prosperity, in order that it might spring up into a new and more powerful life. The very fact that the subject I shall have today to discuss is the subject of education shows that the ideal is quickened, and is taking practical shape.

It may, however, be fairly asked why I have devoted so much time to the discussion of the general aim of co-operation, and the difference between mediaevel and modern societies, instead of proceeding at once to consider the subject assigned to me. I reply that as a matter of fact, directly I began to deal with the subject I found myself forced to determine what the exact work of co-operative societies is among the crowd of organisations that catch our eye on every side; and my inquiry at least brought out one point very clearly, namely, that though they differ from other societies by the possession of an ideal aim, yet they do not attempt to cover the whole range of human life.

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APPENDIX 8-2 AN ADDRESS BY ARNOLD TOYNBEE ON THE EDUCATION OF CO-OPERATORS - Delivered at the Oxford Co-operative Congress held in 1882.

Now if this be true, it is obvious that co-operation can only claim a part of education as its province, and that my business is to ascertain what that part should be. The absence of any definite conception on this point will perhaps explain the hesitating and uncertain action of co-operators in regard to education and the small fraction of money they have hitherto devoted to it. Seeing that education is the function not of one but of many associations, co-operators have had difficulties in deciding what their exact relation to it ought to be. Elementary education is provided by the State; intermediate education is met by the old foundations in their reformed character and by the new high schools; what is called the higher education will be one of the principal functions of the university colleges which are springing up in the great towns. No one proposes that co-operators should venture to grapple with the seven times heated problem of religious education; that task must be abandoned to the Churches, but the fact that it is impossible for co-operators to adopt a distinct religious creed is again a point of difference between them and the mediaeval guilds of deep significance. As regards technical education, it at first sight might seem admirably fitted for co-operators to undertake, but I believe it will be found that technical schools established by employers or by Government for each particular trade will do the work far better than could societies, whose members are drawn from every trade.

What part of education then is left for co-operators to appropriate? The answer I would give is, the education of the citizen. By this I mean the education of each member of the community, as regards the relation in which he stands to other individual citizens, and to the community as a whole. But why should co-operators, more than any one else, take up this part of education? Because co-operators, if they would carry out their avowed aims, are more absolutely in need of such an education than any other persons, and because if we look at the

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APPENDIX 8-2 AN ADDRESS BY ARNOLD TOYNBEE ON THE EDUCATION OF CO-OPERATORS - Delivered at the Oxford Co-operative Congress held in 1882.

origin of the co-operative movement we shall see that this is the work in education most thoroughly in harmony with its ideal purpose.

We all know what the circumstances were under which co-operation arose, and a hurried glance at the main features of the great industrial revolution of a hundred years ago will be sufficient to remind us of the nature of the problem with which Robert Owen had to grapple. The slowly dissolving framework of mediaeval industrial life was suddenly broken in pieces by the mighty blows of the steam engine and the power loom. With it disappeared, like a dream, those ancient habits of social union and personal affection which had lingered on in the quiet homesteads where master and apprentice worked side by side in the loom and at the forge. Industry was dragged from cottages into factories and cities; the operative who laboured in the mill was parted from the capitalist who owned it; and the struggle for the wealth which machinery promised, withered the old bonds of mutual trust, and made competition seem a new and terrible force. Of the innumerable evils which prevailed in this age of confusion, Owen fixed his eyes on two - isolation and competition; and to restore the ideas of brotherhood and citizenship, which had been trampled underfoot, he proposed the formation of self-complete communities, with property in common, and based upon the principle of equal association and the pursuit of a moral life. The societies actually formed were not successful, but the aim of their founder is still that of the co-operative societies of the present day. Their task, however, is a more difficult one than Owen's, for whilst he bade men retire from the-world and regain the idea of brotherhood in the life of small independent communities, co-operators are content that men should remain in the world, and seek to make them good citizens of the great community of the English people. Owen, in fact, would have replaced the isolation of individuals by the isolation of groups, which was to go back instead of to advance. The compact, close-knit

Source: Congress Proceedings, 1882, pp 59-61.

APPENDIX 8-2 AN ADDRESS BY ARNOLD TOYNBEE ON THE EDUCATION OF CO-OPERATORS - Delivered at the Oxford Co-operative Congress held in 1882.

life of the towns and guilds of the middle ages had to be broken up in order that the inhabitants of this island might become one nation. A great writer who brooded over the same problem that filled the mind of Robert Owen has cast a glance of regret upon the life of which the mediaeval castle was the centre; but the isolation typified by the mediaeval castle was infinitely greater than that suggested by long rows of artisans' dwellings upon which its ruins look down, for it was the isolation of men united in close bonds by the spirit of aggression and the fear of violence; and it is the disappearing of the evils that produced union in the past which makes possible the seeming estrangement in which men now live. That estrangement is the price we have paid for national life and for individual independence; the problem for us is not to re-create union at the cost of national life, but to reconcile the union of individuals with national life; not to produce union at the cost of independence, but to reconcile union with independence.

Further, the workman is now not only independent, he shares likewise in the government of the State; yet at the very time this responsibility is laid upon him, he has entered upon conditions of industrial life which seem to exhaust his energies and dull his intelligence. A law of political development has slowly raised him from the position of a serf to that of a citizen; a law of industrial development has degraded him, by division of labour, from a man into a machine. These are the difficulties we have to face, the complicated character of modern citizenship, and the deadening effect of minute subdivision of labour, and these it is which make the education of which I speak, the education of the citizen in his duties as a citizen, indispensible.

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APPENDIX 8-2 AN ADDRESS BY ARNOLD TOYNBEE ON THE EDUCATION OF CO-OPERATORS - Delivered at the Oxford Co-operative Congress held in 1882.

I shall draw, only in outline, a scheme for such citizen-education, it being my desire to prove to co-operators that they should undertake this work, rather than to discuss in detail what such education should be. The following is a sketch of the principal subjects which ought to be dealt with.

I. Political Education - 1. A description of existing political institutions in England, local and central. 2. The history of these political institutions in England. 3. The history of political ideas, as found in the great writers, such as Burke an De Tocqueville. 4. The political relations of England to other countries and to her colonies.

II. Industrial Education - 1. A description of the present industrial system in England, and the main causes of the production and distribution of wealth. 2. A history of industrial institutions, e.g. the mediaeval guilds, the poor-law, and trade unions. 3. A history of the material condition of the working classes. 4. The history of social ideas, and of scheme of social reform.

III. Sanitary Education - The duties of citizens in relation to the prevention of the spread of disease.

You will observe that the whole scheme is framed, not with reference to the education of the individual man, but of the citizen, with a view to showing what are his duties to his fellow men, and in what way union with them is possible. The mere vague impulse in a man to do his duty is barren without the knowledge which enables him to perceive what his duties are, and how to perform them; and it seems to me that only through associations like yours can an efficient citizen-education be given to the great masses of the working people. Men who

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still dream of the reconstruction of industrial life by the union of capital and labour, will recognise at once that this education is the necessary preliminary to any such attempts.

Several objections to the proposal will, however, occur to everyone. Is there not a danger of political science being made a vehicle of partisan virulence? Is there not danger that the attempt to deal with the perilous passing questions of the hour may sow division amongst co-operators? I answer that it is no doubt difficult to handle the sensitive living interests of human beings in the same neutral and disinterested spirit in which it is so easy to approach the facts of physical science. But, just because the matter requires a larger spirit than that of men swayed by the ordinary petty considerations of a party or a class, is it one which co-operators, who seek to win such a spirit, should be eager to undertake; it is for them, above all others, to prove that men's deepest interests are not the peculiar possession of factions and parties, but the rightful inheritance of every citizen.

But again, it may be objected that even if co-operators were willing to adopt such subjects as part of their education, there are few teachers with the requisite impartiality of mind and width of knowledge. I do not think this objection a weighty one. In the ranks of co-operators themselves, and in the Universities there are, I am convinced, persons who have studied political and social questions with all the keenness of partisans, but without their prejudice. The fact that these men will often, of course, have reached definite practical conclusions will not destroy their influence as scientific teachers. Another objection is that the expense of providing lecturers of this stamp would be greater than co-operators would be willing to incur. I do not deny

Source: Congress Proceedings, 1882, pp 59-61.

APPENDIX 8-2 AN ADDRESS BY ARNOLD TOYNBEE ON THE EDUCATION OF CO-OPERATORS - Delivered at the Oxford Co-operative Congress held in 1882.

that the cost might be considerable, but I think that if you adopt the suggestion thrown out by Professor Stuart, in his address at Gloucester (p. 23), that a Central Board should appoint lecturers to certain districts within which they should move from town to town, you would reduce the cost to a sum which co-operators ought not to grudge.

The greatest obstacle, in my opinion, to the success of the plan would not be the difficulty of finding competent teachers nor the greatness of the expense, but the apathy of co-operators themselves in the acquisition of knowledge. The difficulty of persuading workmen to listen to anything which does not concern pleasure or profit has long been acknowledged, and is, I think, even stronger than it used to be. Let me give you an example from the writings of one who was himself a workman, and spent the best years of his life in ardent and daring advocacy of the workman's cause. Speaking of the eager groups of artisans who could be seen discussing political questions forty years ago, Thomas Cooper remarks, with bitterness, in his autobiography, "Now you will see no such groups in Lancashire. But you will hear well-dressed working men talking, as they walk with their hands in their pockets, of 'co-ops', and their shares in them, or in building societies. And you will see others, like idiots, leading small greyhound dogs, covered with cloth, on a string! They are about to race, and they are betting money as they go! And yonder comes another clamorous dozen of men, cursing and swearing, and betting upon a few pigeons they are about to let fly! As for their betting on horses - like their masters! - it is perfect madness . . . Working men had ceased to think, and wanted to hear no thoughtful talk: at least, it was so with the greater number of them." We may, perhaps allow something for the disposition of an old man to praise the generation to which he belonged,

Source: Congress Proceedings, 1882, pp 59-61.

APPENDIX 8-2 AN ADDRESS BY ARNOLD TOYNBEE ON THE EDUCATION OF CO-OPERATORS - Delivered at the Oxford Co-operative Congress held in 1882.

but I am sure that there are many workmen who could give similar evidence. Of course one explanation is, that workmen are less eager now about political and social questions, because they are more prosperous, and this is the danger co-operators have to meet - the danger than material comfort may diminish spiritual energy. We ought, moreover, in fairness, to recognise that it is not unnatural for men wearied by long hours of monotonous toil to indulge in sports and coarse amusements; that for them to devote their scanty leisure to intellectual exertion requires extraordinary efforts. But if political progress is not to end in political degradation, the efforts must be made. Langour can only be conquered by enthusiasm, and enthusiasm can only be kindled by two things, an ideal which takes the imagination by storm, and a definite intelligible plan for carrying out that ideal into practice. The plan I have ventured to hint at in this paper; the ideal is yours by inheritance - it is nothing less than that of brotherhood and a perfect citizenship. We have abandoned, and rightly abandoned, the attempt to realise citizenship by separating ourselves from society, we will never abandon the belief that it is yet to be won, amid the press and confusion of the ordinary world in which we move. If, however, this great task is to be accomplished, if co-operators are to arrive at a correct solution to the social problems which are every day becoming more grave, if workmen are to rightly exercise the unparalleled political power of which they have become possessed, then they must receive a social and political education such as no other institutions have offered, and which I believe co-operative societies, by their origin and their aims, are bound to provide.

Source: Congress Proceedings, 1882, pp 59-61.

APPENDIX 8-3 YORK EQUITABLE INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY - CHARITABLE AND OTHER SUBSCRIPTIONS AND GRANTS

The following subscriptions and grants are made annually from the reserve fund by the members, in addition to grants made from time to time for any special, local, Co-operative or national purpose:

York County Hospital	50 guineas
York Dispensary	40 guineas
Yorkshire School for the Blind	10 guineas
York Blue and Grey Coat Schools	5 guineas
York Children's Fund	5 guineas
York Health and Housing Reform Association ...	5 guineas
York and District Nursing Association	5 guineas
Royal Institute for Deaf and Dumb, Derby	5 guineas
National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children	5 guineas
North Western Sectional Demonstration	5 guineas
Mrs. Jones' Convalescent Fund	5 pounds
York Maternity Hospital	3 guineas
York Association for Prevention of Consumption ...	2 guineas
National Housing Reform Council	2 guineas
A.S.R.S. Orphan Fund	2 guineas
York Aged and Poor People's Christmas Fund ...	2 guineas
International Co-operative Alliance	1 guinea
Society's Relief Fund (as required)	£25 to £50
Society's Convalescent Fund, for Otley, Blackpool and Bridlington Convalescent Homes (as required)	Grants of 10 guineas

Two-hundred-and-fifty in-patients' and out-patients' notes for the hospital were distributed amongst the members last year, and 320 Dispensary notes.

Source: G. Briggs, Jubilee History of the York Equitable Industrial Society Ltd., (Manchester, 1909), pp 268-269.

APPENDIX 8-3 YORK EQUITABLE INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY - CHARITABLE AND OTHER SUBSCRIPTIONS AND GRANTS

The Society, being a shareholder to the extent of £250 in the North-West Sectional Co-operative Convalescent Homes Association Limited, has the privilege of sending convalescents to the Blackpool and Otley Homes at a charge of 12s.6d. per week, or, when vacancies permit, visitors at about double this rate. The same charges are made for admission to the C.W.S. Convalescent Home at Roden, near Shrewsbury.

Applications for Hospital or Dispensary notes, to be made to the Secretary's office during usual office hours, where particulars respecting Convalescent Homes can also be obtained.

Applications for assistance from the Society's relief fund in cases of temporary distress through sickness or loss of employment to be made at the General Manager's office during office hours.

Convalescent and relief fund cases are submitted to the Directors by the Secretary or General Manager at the weekly Board Meetings.

Source: G. Briggs, Jubilee History of the York Equitable Industrial Society Ltd., (Manchester, 1909), pp 268-269.

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